V.183 no.16

Reagan's Cabinet—*Morton Kondracke*
Literary Malaise—*Alfred Kazin* • **Steel Thyself**—*Nicholas von Hoffman*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

October 18, 1980 Price $1.25

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TRB

from Washington
October 18, 1980

Stop Signs

It makes a reporter's mouth water to think of all the hair-raising things that could happen counting up the votes in this election. He gets to write a piece about the electoral college every four years, for example, and then he must put the subject back on the shelf for another long wait. The reporter explains conscientiously that there is a bombshell there in the Constitution, ticking away cheerfully like an innocent old grandfather clock. It happened, let me see, in 1800 (Thomas Jefferson) and in 1824 (John Quincy Adams). In 1876 they couldn't certify the electors and set up an electoral commission (Rutherford B. Hayes). Then there was a foul-up over the vice presidency in 1836 and the Senate had to straighten it out. There have been some wonderful near-misses, too. For example, in 1948 a shift of less than 0.6 percent of the popular vote for Truman in two states would have thrown the election into the House (where very likely another deadlock would have occurred, in view of the political alignment).

It seems incredible that such a risk wouldn't create more excitement and a desire to tidy things up. But why bother? There were only those three instances in 47 elections and the last one was over a century ago. Why worry? The reporter says to himself, "What the hell, I don't want the election to go to the House and all that rubbish, but what a story if it does happen!"

America is wonderfully casual. I think it shows a sublime self-confidence. God looks after us. A blue-ribbon Commission on Electoral Reform named by the American Bar Association reported in January 1967 that "the electoral college method of electing a President of the United States is archaic, undemocratic, complex, ambiguous, indirect and dangerous."

Those are real high-toned epithets; count them, six! Nothing was done about it, of course, though the report helped enact the Twenty-fourth Amendment clearing up the problem of presidential disability and succession. The electoral college does do queer tricks. It has produced, for example, 14 presidents who did not get a majority of the popular vote. This is because of the winner-take-all system. We hold 50 elections this November 4, not one, with each state's electoral votes counted separately, and this often produces hairbreadth consequences. It will happen again if the Reagan-Carter battle is close enough. In several elections a small shift of popular votes in one state would have swung the election. For example, in 1960 a change of 4,500 votes in Illinois and 23,000 in Texas would have meant Nixon instead of Kennedy. In 1948 a shift of 17,000 in Illinois, 9,000 in California, and 3,500 in Ohio would have elected Dewey, not Truman. What a change in history might have transpired. What a lottery.

Other groups have weighed in with solemn reports. Exactly 30 years ago this month the 16-member committee of the American Political Science Association produced a study on which it had labored four years. It also dealt with the curious quirks of America's elective system. They used some strong language, too, flatly announcing that America's two political parties "are now probably the most archaic institutions in the United States." I have the report and the news release before me, dated 6:00 p.m., Friday, October 13, 1950. It predicted dire consequences if there was no reform. There was no reform; the predictions came true. The committee said, 30 years ago, that national party conventions were "unwieldy, unrepresentative and less than responsible" and that the "alternatives between the parties are defined so badly that it is often difficult to determine what the election has decided even in the broadest terms."

The most serious danger the committee saw, in its 30,000 word study under Wesleyan's E. E. Schattschneider, was an arrogant president filling the gap left by a weakling party. There might be "grave consequences in an explosive era," it said, in shifting "excessive responsibility to the President." It was a forecast of Nixon and Watergate. Unfortunately, nations that don't heed warnings in time are like motorists who don't bother about stop signs. The report recommended biennial party conventions (tentatively adopted by the Democrats), and federal funding of campaign expenditures. The committee wanted the parties to distribute the money to enhance party prestige; instead the money now goes to the candidates directly, making them even more independent. The report, entitled *Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System*, also recommended establishment of permanent 50-member party councils to act as boards of directors to establish integrated leadership.

There will be proposals for reform after this election and, indeed, people seem so dissatisfied with the situation that something might come of them at last. The German election, just held, brought out 90 percent of the voters; America's boring two-year process brings out only about half of the eligibles. Excitement is finally picking up with the actual vote only three weeks away; for comparison, the entire British election of February 1974 took only three weeks, the whole of it, from dissolution of Parliament to the vote.

One thing, at any rate, is pretty certain in 1980: we won't have the thrill of throwing it all into the House when nobody has a clear majority in the electoral college (270 votes). To do that, third man John Anderson would have to split off some of the electoral votes. But at the moment that seems unlikely.

We should all venerate the founding fathers who gave us the electoral college, and I find I single out delegate George Mason, who remarked in his constitutional labors, "It would be as unnatural to refer the choice of a proper character for chief Magistrate [i.e., president] to the people, as it would to refer a trial of colours to a blind man."

There's a robust man! And that's the emotional problem of making changes in the all-but-sacred 200-year-old system. Alexander Hamilton said, in discussing how to pick a president: "A small number of persons, selected by their fellow-citizens from the general mass, will be most likely to possess the information and discernment requisite to such complicated investigations."

But the electoral college in normal elections has long since gone from deliberative body to puppet show, with the rise of political parties unanticipated by Mason or Hamilton. The written Constitution was amended by the unwritten constitution. Now, surely, it is time to carry the amendment process further, by one means or another.

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Correspondence

Who's right on economics?

To the editors:

In his review of Paul Blumberg's *Inequality in an Age of Decline* (*TNR*, September 6 & 13), Herbert Gintis states that one of the points Blumberg makes, "again accompanied by extensive statistical documentation, is that the past decade has witnessed an exacerbation of social inequality, a deterioration in the economic position of the poor and minorities and a reduction of real wages," a view which Mr. Gintis does not challenge.

However, a recent book, the *Zero-Sum Society* by Lester Thurow, to which Gintis later refers, avers the opposite. Thurow states: "After accounting for inflation, taxes, and population growth, real incomes have gone up. . . . The average American is better off, not worse off. . . . The real standard of living was rising. . . . Most Americans have experienced a real income gain of 15% from 1972 to 1978. . . . There has been essentially no change in the distribution of money income between rich and poor." Regarding the charge that the "cost of living has gone up faster for low-income groups. . . . This charge is not substantiated." As far as minorities are concerned, Thurow writes, "Black household incomes have risen from 58% to 59% in comparison to whites" and in "Hispanic households . . . relative income has risen from 71% to 75% in comparison to whites" during the mid-1970s. Finally, about the aged Thurow says, "If anything the elderly have improved their relative position during the period of high inflation." He concludes "low-income groups have not gained in the 1970s as they did in the 1960s but they also have not been falling behind." Whose interpretation of the relative economic situation of the poor and minorities during the recent past is correct, Blumberg's or Thurow's?

David Manders
Brentwood, California

Klan endorsement

To the editors:

. . . I cannot allow your statements about me in your issue of September 27 to remain uncorrected. First, I call your attention to the *New York Times* report of August 1, 1980, headlined: "Major Klan Group Gives Reagan its Endorsement."

"The Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, now regarded as the largest and most militant Klan group in the country has endorsed Ronald Reagan for President and said in its newspaper that the Republican Platform 'reads as if it were written by a Klansman.'

The endorsement was made in an editorial in the Klan group's newspaper, written by Imperial Wizard Bill Wilkinson and distributed Wednesday. Mr. Wilkinson said . . . that the editorial resulted from ratification of his recommendation to endorse Mr. Reagan by delegates to the Klan's national convention at Huntsville, Alabama, on July 19."

It was not, therefore, just "one Klan leader" who endorsed Governor Reagan, as you assert, and it was not just Reagan who was endorsed; it was also the Republican party platform. In addition to the August 1 *New York Times* story, on August 2 Carl Rowan reported the endorsement on "Agronsky & Co."

The Klan endorsement was made in July and reported by the *New York Times* on August 1. Despite the fact that Governor Reagan had scheduled an appearance before the National Urban League for August 5, neither he nor his staff rejected the Klan endorsement until after his speech to the Urban League, and after he learned of a speech I made the same day before a black professional group in Dallas noting the endorsement. That may be a "prompt" repudiation to you. It is not promptness from my point of view.

As to my statement, while you may not like what I actually said, you do not have the right to quote part of it and then introduce a characterization that is untrue. I did not say that "Reagan's nomination raised the specter of white sheets." What I said on August 5, before the Reagan repudiation of the Klan endorsement, was: "Certainly, as he speaks to a black group today, many will see the specter of a white sheet behind him."

The "black group" to which I referred was the National Urban League. I mentioned the Klan only one other time, August 6, and noted that I had been informed that Governor Reagan had, the night before, rejected the endorsement. You appear to suggest that no one, not the *New York Times*, not Carl Rowan, not I, should have reported the endorsement, even though it had been made.

More important than who "injected" the Klan into public debate is the question of whether there are endorsements that by editorial fiat can be said to be prohibited in public discussion. The statement of the fact of the Klan's endorsement of Governor Reagan and the Republican platform cannot be forbidden simply because Governor Reagan says he does not want the endorsement or because each of us has contempt for the Klan. . . .

I do not believe that either Governor Reagan or (surprisingly) *The New Republic* understands that the rhetoric of the Republican platform, which Governor Reagan has not repudiated, gives aid and comfort to the Ku Klux Klan and worries those of us who are black and have memories of how close to the surface anti-black sentiment still is in this country.

As I look at the extended Republican planks opposing court-ordered school desegregation by use of busing, questioning affirmative action, supporting states' rights, and suggesting a particular attitude test for judges, it does not surprise me that the imperial wizard of the Klan said of Governor Reagan even after the repudiation of the endorsement, "If he runs on that platform, he stands on Klan ground."

This issue of why the Klan is comfortable with the Republican platform is valid for debate now or at any other time. A Ku Klux Klan endorsement is not a censorable four-letter word, no matter how much I detest the Klan. The Klan is not insignificant; it is not harmless.

The continued press reference to my comments as somehow unacceptable are remarkable efforts at censorship by sophisticated smear. If you say I should have ignored the Klan endorsement as Governor Reagan had before my speeches, I disagree.

Patricia Roberts Harris
Secretary of Health and Human Services
Washington, DC

The editors reply:

We accused Mrs. Harris of saying that Reagan's nomination "raises the specter of white sheets," whereas she actually said that "many will see the specter

(continued on page 40)

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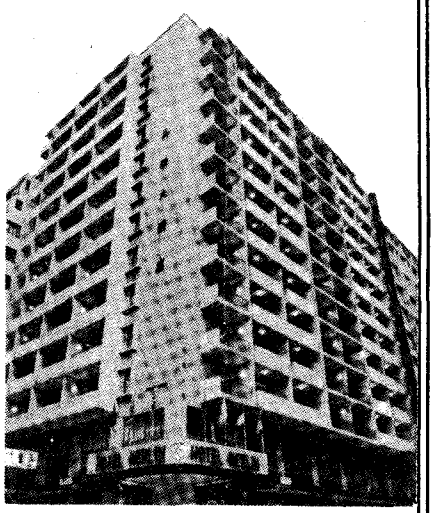

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

October 18, 1980

French Terror

In Paris last Tuesday, 100,000 people stopped work and marched in protest against the bombing of the rue Copernic synagogue. It was a stirring scene, but not as stirring as the bomb was frightening. Against neo-Nazi terrorism, more than a march is required. Once again, a specter haunts Europe, but this time it is the specter of the past, not the future. Some 84 people killed in a railroad station in Bologna, 11 at the Oktoberfest in Munich, four more on the rue Copernic: these are the latest victims of an old European disease. The bomb in Paris exploded a few minutes too soon, so fewer people died there than in Bologna or Munich, but the explosion echoes more loudly because it reminds us of so many other murders. And it suggests that anti-Semitism is still a possible ideology, a rallying cry on the political right, as it has been before in French history.

Indeed, the survival of a certain sort of upper-class anti-Semitism in France may help to explain the revival of anti-Semitism in the streets. What other Western political leader could have spoken as Premier Barre did last week, when he condemned "this odious attempted assassination of Jews in their synagogue which struck down innocent Frenchmen crossing the rue Copernic"? Barre is no fascist, of course, or anything close to a fascist, but the unselfconsciousness of that remark reveals a political sensibility that has hardly begun to absorb the lessons of the 20th century. And it is still true that those who do not learn from the past live in danger of repeating it.

The French have been reluctant to learn, reluctant even to remember. The experience of Vichy, the years of alliance with Hitler's Germany, the forced deportation of France's Jews—none of this has yet been fully and honestly confronted, not, at least, at the highest levels of French political life. (It is worth recalling the long refusal of the state-run television network to screen Marcel Ophuls's brilliant cinematic study of resistance and collaboration, *The Sorrow and the Pity*, and the more recent reluctance to show *The Holocaust*.) The long Algerian war opened the way for a return of Vichy or of the spirit of Vichy: overt racism and police brutality reemerged dramatically. This is the past on which the neo-Nazis draw, and it is a past still present for at least some members of the Giscard government. That is why it has been so difficult to mount a serious campaign against right-wing terrorists. It's not that the terrorists have sympathizers in the government (though they may have sympathizers in the police). But there are certainly men and women there who are unwilling to look too closely at the collective history of the French right and at the netherworld it has spawned.

The neo-Nazis have seized on a particular moment in French history, a moment of cynicism, opportunism, and appeasement. The abject posture that the Giscard government has adopted toward oil-rich Arab states, the hostility toward Israel, the refusal to prosecute Palestinian terrorists captured in France: all this helps to create a climate for domestic ugliness. It invites rightists to seek Jewish scapegoats at home and Arab support abroad. And where better than in Libya and Beirut? The terrorists of Paris stand on the far right, but they apparently have made connections (and

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the German neo-Nazis certainly have made connections) with these two centers of international revolution.

Now the parties of the French left will don the mantle of anti-fascism. Let them wear it well—that is, honestly—and come to grips with the apologists for political terrorism in their own ranks. More than a march is required. It is necessary to repudiate not only this particular gang of thugs but the larger politics out of which they come, left and right, Red Brigades and neo-Nazis, the PLO and the IRA, pseudo-revolutionaries, and violent nationalists. They are all murderers.

White House Watch

Plus and Minus

Near Philadelphia on October 2, at one of those backyard assemblies that Jimmy Carter favors for campaign purposes, he was asked whether a paid TV spot playing up "the Jesus Christ amendment" that Congressman John B. Anderson introduced in 1961, 1963, and 1965, and thereafter abandoned, showed that Carter approves "the use of a little mud-slinging, maybe." Carter could reasonably have said, but didn't, that a reminder that Anderson once wanted the US Constitution to declare this country of mixed faiths "a Christian nation" was fair enough. The President answered instead: "I've never heard of the TV spot that you referred to about Anderson and the Jesus Christ amendment. I, in fact, have very carefully avoided any reference to Congressman Anderson, for political tactical reasons as well as others." The reference to the Anderson amendment was in a radio campaign spot, not a TV commercial, and it was withdrawn immediately after Carter was asked about it. The TV spots produced by Carter's media guru, Gerald Rafshoon, ignore Anderson and the radio spots mention him only in saying that a vote for him is a vote for Ronald Reagan.

Carter and his senior surrogates continued to concentrate on Reagan, as planned, with one result that was not planned. Carter's repeated assertions that a Reagan victory might leave US society critically divided —Christian from Jew, white from black, poor from rich, and so on—indicated to a good many reporters and commentators that he was getting panicky or even, as the *Washington Post* suggested, going "haywire." Why Ronald Reagan's long record of rhetorical extremes and smarmy pretensions that he's really a gentle moderate should not be seen to invite the kind of barbs aimed at him by Carter baffles me. But the polls and the general reception of Carter's recent tactics suggest that Reagan's effort to refashion his image is working well for him. They also suggest that Carter might do well to stay off the road and on the job at the White House for a while, at least until he calms down and brings his own rhetoric back into line with what the electorate, or anyhow the pundits who claim to comprehend and speak for the electorate, expect of a President. Recent events at and near the White House have variously helped and hurt Carter. At worst, however, they haven't brought upon him the torrent of scorn and denunciation that his performance on the campaign road has lately loosed.

One sorry White House episode was the President's doing and it was induced by the doings of his brother Billy. On August 4, when the President reported to the country and to a Senate subcommittee on his role in Billy's dealings with the government of Libya, he promised to issue guidelines governing future relationships between US officials and members of the Carter family. He produced the guidelines October 1, beginning them by saying that "the purpose of these guidelines is to caution government officials. . . ." He acknowledged in the next sentence that "the primary responsibility to avoid impropriety of course rests on the President and the members of his family." He'd have done well thereafter to order his relatives to stay the hell away from the US government, its officials, and other governments, except for paying taxes, doing their civic and military duty, and the like. Instead he reserved a right to continue using members of his family as his "official representatives" and said no more than that "there is a strong presumption against" members of his family "seeking to do business with the government." So, the humiliation of issuing such guidelines now undergone, things remain the same. Billy says on national TV that he isn't apologizing "for a damn thing." Rosalynn Carter is campaigning for her husband and, if he's reelected, could be off at any time to another country. His mother, Miz Lillian, presumably won't soon be doing that again, she having broken a hip. Carter's second son, Chip, has moved from the payroll of the Democratic National Committee to the payroll of the Carter-Mondale campaign committee, where he's said to be a valued advocate of his father. He and his sister Amy still live in the White House mansion. The third son, Jeffrey, moved out of the mansion with his wife a year or so ago to their own home in nearby Virginia. He's a professional geographer and cartographer, and one of his principal clients was recently disclosed to be the Philippine government. The oldest son, Jack, a family oddball who appears to prefer life on his own, is in business in Georgia.

Considering the initial determination of the Billy Carter subcommittee to find something criminal in the Libyan affair, the President and other involved officials came off fairly well in the subcommittee's report. The main conclusion had to do with the Department of Justice investigation that led Billy to register as an agent of the Libyan government. "The subcommittee concludes," the report said, "that the investigation was

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honestly and conscientiously conducted by the criminal division. . . . There is no evidence that either the investigation or disposition of the case by the criminal division was skewed in favor of Billy Carter because he is the brother of the President." There were partisan efforts, mostly Republican, to make something more of the little to be said beyond that. The majority finding that the President, Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti, and national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski displayed extremely poor judgment is justified but hardly cataclysmic. Republican senator Charles McC. Mathias of Maryland summarized that aspect as follows: "There is both a wry humor and cynical wisdom in the old adage that it is better to deal with a crook than a fool, because a crook has his honest days. The Billy Carter affair presents this subcommittee with a choice between the two, and I am inclined to believe that we are dealing with folly. This is of more concern to me than if it were a single incident of dishonest or even criminal conduct, because it suggests repeated follies that seem to indicate a lack of competence built into the political system."

The subcommittee and its chairman, Birch Bayh of Indiana, wistfully invited the Justice Department's internal investigators, particularly the independent Office of Professional Responsibility, to come up later with something that might be more damning and might justify reopening the Senate investigation. The OPR's head, Michael Shaheen, has been given so much independence that he tells the department's press information officers to bugger off when they dare to ask him how an investigation is going or when it is likely to be concluded.

Partly because of department practice but mostly because of the wretchedly drafted special-prosecutor section of the Ethics in Government Act, similar uncertainty shrouds an investigation of a charge that Tim Kraft, Carter's former campaign manager and White House assistant, sniffed cocaine in 1978. Attorney General Civiletti decided not to ask the Court of Appeals panel that authorizes and appoints special prosecutors to let him announce that one had been requested and appointed in this case, so he can't and won't confirm that New Orleans attorney Gerald Gallinghouse is at work on it. The ethics law gives the attorney general discretion to determine whether a preliminary department investigation has or has not disproved a charge against ranking federal officials. Although the department would not normally try to indict anybody charged only with the possession of cocaine involved in sniffing it, Civiletti reads the law to mean that he must request a special prosecutor when there is anything less than absolute proof that an allegation is false, however trivial the offense, if it concerns certain officials. It's the Hamilton Jordan affair over again, except that Kraft has yet to be absolved after months of investigation, as Jordan was. Kraft is on leave with pay, huddling with a lawyer at enormous expense. His defenders, lacking proof of a negative, can say no more than the President said in mid-September when he was asked whether he believed the cocaine charges true or false: "I'm not trying to prejudge it but I have confidence in Tim and he says that they are false."

John Osborne

Politics

Stalled Out

Ronald Reagan's top command is confident enough of the Republican candidate's chances of winning on November 4 to have begun drawing up Cabinet lists. The following is the current consensus of Reagan's advisers. It's by no means final, is still subject to jockeying among Cabinet contenders, and has not been subjected to a concerted clearance process, but I'm told the list has been discussed with Reagan himself. It is:

Secretary of State—George P. Shultz, president of the Bechtel Corporation, former secretary of labor and the treasury and director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Secretary of Defense—General Alexander Haig, president of United Technologies Corporation, former NATO commander and White House chief of staff under Richard Nixon.

Secretary of Treasury—William Simon, who held the same job under President Ford and would like something better under Reagan. If he refuses, Alan Greenspan, Ford's former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers and currently Reagan's top economic adviser, is in line for the job.

Attorney General—William French Smith, senior partner in the Los Angeles law firm of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, and more importantly, Reagan's personal attorney.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development—Senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania, Reagan's 1976 vice presidential running mate. Schweiker also has the option of taking Health and Human Services. If he does, HUD will go to Representative Thomas Evans, the conservative congressman from Delaware.

Secretary of Commerce—Bill Brock, currently chairman of the Republican National Committee.

Secretary of Transportation—Drew Lewis, a Philadelphia industrialist and former Pennsylvania GOP chairman, currently the Reagan campaign's liaison man at the RNC.

Other Cabinet jobs—Agriculture, Labor, Education (which Reagan wants to abolish), Energy, and Interior are still question marks. Probably Reagan will want to hunt up a black or a Hispanic for one of these jobs, those groups being so far unrepresented in the current Reagan master list.

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There is one woman slated for Cabinet rank—Anne Armstrong, former White House adviser and ambassador to Great Britain under Ford, who would become US ambassador to the United Nations under Reagan.

Other top jobs would be parceled out as follows:

CIA director—William Casey, a wartime OSS man, former SEC chairman, and Eximbank director, now Reagan's campaign manager.

Office of Management and Budget—Gerald R. Ford, who asked for the OMB responsibility during the failed negotiations to make him Reagan's vice presidential candidate, will be offered the job. If he refuses, it would go to either former HEW secretary Caspar Weinberger or Greenspan.

OTHER WHITE HOUSE jobs are tentatively slated as follows: chief of staff, Ed Meese, Reagan's issues coordinator; national security adviser, Richard V. Allen, the campaign's top foreign policy coordinator; chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, either Charls Walker, former undersecretary of the treasury, or Greenspan; domestic affairs adviser, Martin Anderson, the campaign's domestic issues man.

Four other important campaign operatives, I am told, will get their pick of sub-Cabinet or White House jobs. They are Richard Wirthlin, Reagan's pollster and political strategist; Michael Deaver, his chief scheduler; James Baker, former campaign manager for George Bush and Gerald Ford, but now a trusted Reagan campaign tactician; and William E. Timmons, Ford's former chief White House lobbyist and now Reagan's field operations director.

Now to the question: is Reagan going to win and be in a position to put these people in command of the government?

Last weekend's flurry of polls and electoral vote projections certainly justifies Reagan's efforts to think about who will staff his administration. *Newsweek* showed Reagan leading in states with 321 electoral votes (only 270 are necessary for victory), the *New York Times*, 314, and the *Washington Post*, 283. The *Christian Science Monitor* quoted Democratic pollster Michael Barone as putting Reagan ahead in states with 334 electoral votes. The *Monitor*'s political correspondent, Richard Cattani, reported that Carter campaign officials conceded Reagan is ahead in electoral votes, with 232, but say Carter is close behind at 212, with 94 in doubt.

At the same time, an interesting gathering took place at a Chinese restaurant in Washington on September 26. Ten of the country's wiser pollsters, political analysts, and reporters registered their gut feelings about how this election would turn out. The group included elections expert Richard Scammon, California pollster Mervin Field, analysts Alan Baron and David Gergen, and reporters E. J. Dionne of the *New York Times*, James Doyle of *Newsweek*, Cattani of the *Monitor*, columnist Kevin Phillips, poll-watcher Barry Sussman of the *Washington Post*, and John Stacks of *Time* magazine. Carter's chief pollster, Patrick Caddell, gave the group the benefit of his advice, but left before the polling took place. Result: eight out of the 10 participants picked Carter to win the election. One of the two who picked Reagan, Mervin Field, predicted that Reagan would win both the popular vote (with 45 percent to Carter's 42 and 10 percent for John Anderson) and the electoral vote. One other participant said Reagan would win the electoral vote, but lose the popular vote, 43-44. All the others, in spite of Reagan's lead, said Carter would pull it off in the end and be reelected.

Had I been there, I think I would have done the same, based on the lackadaisical way Reagan had been campaigning, on Carter's incumbency advantages, and on the feeling that as late October fades into November, people around the country will decide they just can't risk entrusting the country's future through the uncertain, complicated perils of the 1980s to a 69-year-old, hip-shooting, lightweight, right-wing ex-movie actor. Even with a Reagan Cabinet made up of stolid, experienced moderate-conservative worthies (and, mercifully, with John Connally nowhere in it), I thought the country would ultimately decide that Carter's campaign ads were right: in the end, late at night in the Oval Office, it's the president whose judgment you have to trust.

THIS WEEK, however, I'm not so sure. I think some of the participants at the Empress Restaurant conclave aren't either. Those electoral vote projections really drive home the difficulty of President Carter's task. He has to hold his shaky southern base and win virtually all of the industrial states from the eastern seaboard to the Mississippi River—states in which Reagan has been holding a lead with the help of John Anderson.

The Carter campaign apparently has turned things around decisively in New York. Carter managers also profess to see movement in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Texas, and Missouri. However, they acknowledge that the progress is going "at snail's pace," and they fear there is not enough time remaining before November 4 to convince traditional Democratic voters—still a majority of the electorate, after all—to fall back into line behind the president.

According to Republican pollster Robert Teeter, "the most significant thing about this campaign is that nothing's moving; it's absolutely flat." Which means that Reagan is holding his lead as the clock keeps ticking. According to both Republican and Democratic polls, Reagan is staying ahead by eight to 10 points in Ohio, for example, which Carter carried in 1976. Carter won that year with 297 electoral votes, just 27 more than necessary. Losing Ohio this year would cost him 25. Reagan still leads, too, in Pennsylvania (by 40 to 33, according to a *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* poll), which has another 23 electoral votes that Carter won in 1976. In Illinois, Michigan, and New Jersey—states

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that Carter lost in 1976 but which he might need to make up losses elsewhere—Reagan apparently still is leading. Republican polls show the Illinois lead at six or seven points and the Michigan lead at eight, actually bigger than it was a week ago.

For Carter, there was little to be optimistic about on his trip to Illinois. The Chicago Democratic organization is preoccupied with internal warfare between Mayor Jane Byrne and state senator Richard M. Daley. Byrne made a ridiculous promise last week to turn out as many people for a downtown rally as greeted the astronauts back from the moon in 1969—around two million. But Chicago's civic center plaza was only about two-thirds filled despite a loud fireworks display and a parade of marching bands. The Chicago Police Department's crowd estimate was 20,000. One black ward committeeman said he'd hired several buses for ward residents to attend an election-eve torchlight parade for Carter four years ago, but brought only one downtown last week. He predicted turnout in his ward on election day would be low. "There's not much interest this year," he said. There is some indication that John Anderson is cutting into Reagan in heavily Republican (but moderate) suburbs around Chicago, yet in some rural downstate areas where Carter the Baptist peanut farmer ran strongly in 1976, local politicians are reporting Reagan ahead two to one.

drawing by Vint Lawrence

Much the same story comes out of Michigan and Ohio. The unions will do their work, but unemployment in the auto and steel industries is hurting Carter. In southern Ohio, which is really part of the Bible belt, Carter doesn't have the strength he had in 1976. Elsewhere in the country, Jews, environmentalists, feminists, and blacks are coming back to their Democratic moorings, but slowly and weakly. "You have to fight with them the whole way," said a Carter campaign official. "You tell them about the 85 percent that Carter's done right for them, but all they want to do is bitch about the 15 percent." Reagan now is scoring six to eight points above normal Republican performance among blue-collar voters, ethnics, and Catholics.

And so Carter is searching for some device to bounce Democrats back to the Democratic ticket. He can think of only one: terror. That is why he said the things he did last week in Wisconsin and Chicago. Outside Milwaukee he told one crowd that Reagan's tax proposals promise only "easy results, easy answers, but end up being worthless, except for the very rich who would benefit greatly at the expense of the working families of this country. . . . I have great confidence in the sound judgment of the American people and I have no doubt that they'll reject this Republican economic program of implausible promises, improbable assumptions, and ill-considered proposals"—which, he said, "create in the people's minds, increasingly, day by day, uncertainty and doubt about the future."

Of course, it's Carter who wants to sow uncertainty and doubt about Reagan. In Chicago Carter said that in his lifetime there's never been a campaign in which the choices were "more sharp, stark [and] important" than this year. "The actions that you take [in November] will literally decide the lives of millions of people in our country and indeed throughout the world." He went on:

> You'll have to determine whether consumers have a voice on Capitol Hill and in the White House, whether the quality of our land and our water and our air will be maintained . . . whether there will be jobs for all Ameri-

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cans, whether working people will be on the inside councils when decisions are made or excluded on the outside, driven from the councils of government and therefore frustrated.

You'll determine whether or not this America will be unified, or if I lose the election, whether Americans might be separated, black from white, Jew from Christian, North from South, rural from urban, whether this nation will be guided from a sense of long-range commitment to peace, sound judgment and broad consultation . . . whether our adversaries will be tempted to end the peace for which we all pray.

The consequences of this election, he said, would be "profound." The alternative to his election, he said, "is too doubtful, too bleak, to contemplate." He said that "catastrophe" might result if the outcome of the election goes "the wrong way."

When editorial writers, columnists, and politicians started groaning over his verbal excesses and the personal abuse he was heaping on Reagan, Carter vowed to clean up his act and base his campaign on "issues." But my guess is there'll be no change in the strategy of trying to scare Democrats back into camp. What's an "issue" anyway? Reagan may be thinking about George Shultz and Gerald Ford for influential jobs in his administration, but he still hobnobs with Jerry Falwell, who thinks God doesn't listen to the prayers of Jews. Reagan may not be a "warmonger," but he does want to step up the arms race and he has talked repeatedly about threatening force in various small crises. Reagan's no racist, but his record is replete with evidence of limited sensitivity to the condition of minorities and the poor. My guess is that the outcome of this election still hinges on what voters really think about Ronald Reagan's predilections. That's still the jugular in this campaign, and Carter still has to go for it.

Morton Kondracke

Defending boondoggles.

Ronald Reagan, Big Spender

When Ronald Reagan starts talking about slashing taxes, cutting government spending, and sharply curtailing the growth of the federal government, liberals understandably get nervous. Reagan's philosophy suggests that his targets will be precisely those programs that liberals care most about—welfare, Medicare, Medicaid, mass transit, environmental protection, and the like. But even liberals recognize that many federal programs owe their existence not to any generous and humane impulses but to organized interest groups, bureaucratic pressures, and simple inertia. So one might take some small comfort from the election of a conservative in the hope that a serious budget-cutter might amputate some expensive programs which serve no useful national purpose. But this year Reagan has shown himself to be no less cowardly than the average politician. His devotion to principle has wilted to the point where he often finds himself outpromising his supposedly spendthrift opponent in the White House. Rather than risk offending anyone by hewing to principle (and, in many cases, his own past positions), Reagan repeatedly has scrapped his conservative script and told his listeners exactly what they wanted to hear. Since Reagan has promised to increase defense spending by six percent each year, and since he shows no stomach for cutting domestic programs that benefit favored constituencies, it is obvious that the real big spender in this race is not Carter or Anderson but Reagan.

None of this, incidentally, is inconsistent with Reagan's record as governor of California. The man who now campaigns as "the greatest tax-cutter in the state's history" actually presided over a predictable increase in both taxes and revenue. State spending increased by 85 percent in real terms during his eight years in office, and per capita taxes doubled. In fact it was the huge surplus in the state treasury, caused by Reagan-era tax increases, that elicited the wave of popular anger which culminated in the passage of Proposition 13.

Reagan's most audacious recent reversal came in a September visit to a Chrysler plant in Detroit, where he declared that the government's rescue of the company from bankruptcy was the "proper answer" after all. If there ever was a program which any intelligent conservative should oppose, the Chrysler bailout must be it. In the first place, it required the federal government to risk $1.5 billion of the taxpayers' money merely to protect Chrysler stockholders, creditors, and employees. In the second place, it overruled the clear dictates of the marketplace, which is supposed to promote efficiency and productivity by rewarding those firms that satisfy consumers and penalizing those that don't. (Reagan's faith in the free market showed further signs of attenuation when he proceeded to object to the "deluge" of Japanese imports.) Reagan and his advisers are fond of using Britain as an illustration of the certain consequences of meddlesome, overgrown government, but apparently they have paid no attention to Britain's unhappy experiments in propping up collapsing corporations, particularly in the auto industry.

In New York City Reagan had occasion to eat past words (and conservative principle) once again. He had opposed the Ford administration's 1975 bailout of the city to avert bankruptcy, but that was before the 1980 campaign. In a speech on October 1, Reagan said that he supported the federal loan guarantees because "now you've got a Mayor Koch who's straightened

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things out." Here a persuasive case can be made that Reagan's present position makes more sense than his old one. The trouble is that his reversal suggests not intellectual evolution but an instinct for political expediency. (Reagan's praise for Koch, a Democrat, is curious and no doubt can be ascribed to the influence of former treasury secretary William Simon, who thinks Koch should be endorsed by the GOP in the next mayoral election.)

Only one day before, Reagan had appeared at a farm in Iowa to attack President Carter's record on agricultural issues and to promise that he would not phase out farm price support programs (as President Nixon, with Earl Butz, tried to do). "We will not turn our backs on programs that have sought to assure the farmer a reasonable income and the consumer an abundant and reasonably priced supply of food and fiber," he said, neglecting to mention that price supports serve the first purpose much more effectively than the second. Here is another costly federal program whose only object is to protect one group from the very free market that Republicans idolize. Last year the Agriculture Department's assorted subsidies to farmers to compensate them for the irrationally low prices set by the free market cost five billion dollars. Reagan also promised, a bit more vaguely, to "work toward the goal of achieving full parity for the American farmer," a goal which, if accomplished, would mean substantially higher food prices. Among his other means of reaching this aim would be "to emphasize the development of fuel farming [i.e., growing grain for gasohol]. . . . Alcohol and other renewable energy sources should contribute to making America energy independent." Further subsidizing gasohol (which already is exempt from the federal gasoline tax and many state taxes) won't contribute much to curing our energy ills, but it will channel more money to farmers (see "Gasoholics Agronomous," *TNR*, June 30, 1979).

Reagan also promises more assistance for the heavily subsidized maritime industry, whose ready access to the federal treasury is particularly indefensible. In fact it is probably the most heavily subsidized industry in the entire economy, exceeding even agriculture. The federal government pays up to half the construction costs of ships built for the merchant marine for use in foreign trade to offset the high cost of building in the US, and then pays additional subsidies to offset the high cost of operating with American crews. The government also requires some of its own agencies to use US-flag ships, paying extra for the service. Added to these are various tax breaks and insurance which bring the total cost to the government to something like a billion dollars. Most industries would be ecstatic to have so much federal help, but the maritime companies and unions are not easily satisfied. In 1977 they tried to push through a bill requiring 9.5 percent of all US oil imports to be carried on US-flag ships, an effort which had Carter's support, thanks to more than $100,000 in maritime contributions to his 1976 campaign. The bill lost, even though a more ambitious bill (reserving 30 percent of oil imports for US-flag ships) had been passed in 1974 before being pocket-vetoed by President Ford. Trying to exploit Carter's failure, Reagan went to shipyards in Pennsylvania and New York to offer himself and a shipload of promises. Reagan echoed all the industry's familiar complaints about the loss of jobs and the decline in US shipbuilding output, and promised a "comprehensive national maritime policy" which "will be targeted toward a greater market share of exports and imports for US-flag shipping." Reagan deliberately avoided saying exactly how he would achieve this goal, but obviously it can't be done without larger federal subsidies to the maritime industry.

In an effort to capture union votes, Reagan also has jettisoned his past views and paid homage to a sacred cow of organized labor, the Davis-Bacon Act. This 1931 law requires contractors doing work for the federal government to pay the "prevailing" local wage, which in practice has come to mean that they have to pay the highest local wage, usually as set by trade unions. Its effect is to raise the cost of most federal construction projects. In fact, one study by the American Enterprise Institute, the conservative think-tank which harbors any number of people awaiting jobs in the Reagan administration, estimated that the Davis-Bacon Act may cost the federal government as much as one billion dollars a year. But in Youngstown, Ohio, last week, Reagan pledged that he wouldn't try to repeal the law, which he has opposed in the past.

So where is Reagan going to cut the budget, if he is going to retain and even expand all these programs? Easy: he's going to eliminate waste. "Through a comprehensive assault on waste and inefficiency," he said in a September economic speech, "I am confident that we can squeeze and trim two percent out of the budget in fiscal year 1981, and that we will be able to increase this gradually to seven percent of what otherwise would have been spent in fiscal year 1985." He went on to say that he actually hoped to cut the budget by as much as 10 percent in this fashion. This is the final proof that Reagan contemplates no change in the status quo. Waste and inefficiency are easy targets, since eliminating them offends no one, even federal bureaucrats. They are also hard to eliminate. But even if Reagan could eliminate all the waste in the government's administration of its programs, he would not have touched the fundamental problem of getting rid

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Liberalism Besieged.

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of those programs which serve only to benefit politically powerful interest groups. Eliminating those programs would be good for the economy and for all taxpayers, but it would cause pain to those groups which rely on them. That is why it is so hard—and so important—to get rid of them.

All this makes clear that the spendthrift candidate this year is Ronald Reagan. Besides vowing to preserve all these expensive programs, of course, he has also promised to raise the Pentagon budget to about $280 billion by 1985. That increase might be possible without a higher level of federal spending if Reagan were serious about abolishing extravagant boondoggles in the domestic budget. But he isn't. If you want to vote for a genuine big spender this year, you can't do better than Ronald Reagan.

Stephen Chapman

The liberal double standard about a Reagan Court.

Judge Not

The campaign to panic liberals into voting for Jimmy Carter because of Ronald Reagan's possible court appointments is desperate twice-over. This emphasis on a minor part of the job (what past president is remembered primarily for his court appointments?) reflects a recognition that Carter's record on the economy, on social welfare, on foreign policy holds little appeal for liberals. More insidiously, it plays on fear that judges are the only bulwark standing between some cherished liberal goals and . . . democracy.

In the past few weeks, two different groups of lawyers and legal scholars have set themselves up to spread the alarm. The "Committee for an Independent Judiciary" is self-described as comprising "America's leading legal counsellors." The sponsors are former federal judge Marvin Frankel; Floyd Abrams, the nation's leading First Amendment lawyer; and Jack Greenberg, director of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Other members include Charles Black, the eminent constitutional scholar, and two past presidents of the American Bar Association. The group is "politically independent," but simply wishes to point out that giving Reagan the opportunity to appoint judges "threatens disastrous results."

The other group, "Americans Concerned for the Judiciary," consists of "46 prominent American lawyers," including former attorney general Griffin Bell, several Harvard law professors, Theodore Sorensen, and other predictable names (including some insatiable joiners who are on both lists). This group charges that Reagan is "a serious threat to the independence and non-partisan nature of our Federal Judiciary." It calls Reagan a creature of the Moral Majority, which it describes as "a *dangerous* new movement" whose "goal is to destroy the independent Federal judiciary as we know it" by demanding "narrow ideological standards on critical questions like abortion." It is asking for contributions "to defend the American tradition of independent Judges committed to defending the Constitution."

Both these groups are independent political action committees, just like the ones spending money to promote Reagan. Carter has criticized those Reagan groups as an evasion of the campaign reform laws and has tried to have them ruled illegal. Like the pro-Reagan groups, these pro-Carter committees plan advertising blitzes, though the Committee for an Independent Judiciary haughtily describes its intentions as a "public education campaign."

The intellectual dishonesty of these two enterprises, involving many of the nation's most respected legal names, is disgraceful. Reagan's judicial appointments are nothing for liberals to anticipate with pleasure. If elected, Reagan will try to appoint philosophical conservatives, whereas we would prefer more liberals like most of Jimmy Carter's appointees. But to suggest that our kind of judge is "independent" and selected on "merit," whereas Reagan's would be "political" and therefore illegitimate, is deceit. The lawyers on the two lists are not ignorant or naive people, so the deceit must be deliberate.

As these lawyers well know, there is no "American tradition of independent Judges" selected purely on merit; if there were such a tradition, President Carter certainly did not follow it; and if Carter had tried to purge judicial selection of all ideological considerations, neither they nor I would have liked the result. In general Carter has appointed judges who believe in affirmative action, in equal rights for women under the Fourteenth Amendment, in busing to achieve school integration, and so on. There are many brilliant legal minds that don't share these views. One already sits on the Supreme Court. What would have been the liberal reaction if Carter had appointed William Rehnquist? Yet there could be no objection to Rehnquist on the grounds of "independence" or "merit."

Jack Greenberg says he wants judges with "the perspective, backgrounds and open minds as well as the diversity of outlook which permits them to consider the complexities of issues which come before the courts." He mentions the Bakke case as one where the diversity of views on the court produced a decision recognizing these complexities, and worries that Reagan's potential opportunity to appoint five Justices "with as close to identical views as can be selected" will eliminate this desirable ideological diversity. Come now, Mr. Greenberg. Your own NAACP Legal Defense Fund asked the Court to reject outright Allan Bakke's challenge to affirmative action, and expressed no yearning for the "complex" compromise that emerged. Three of the likely Supreme Court retirees

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Oil firms find it
Number of deep wells* drilled in U.S.
1977
1978
1979

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are Nixon appointments. If President Carter is re-elected, do you want him to find conservatives to replace Warren Burger or Lewis Powell, in order to retain the present ideological mix? Or would you prefer five new Justices with views "close to identical" to your own?

In their more subtle moments, purveyors of *Reagan-angst* contend that there is a crucial difference between seeking judges with general ideological compatibility and considering how candidates might rule on particular issues. They especially object to the possibility that a "single issue" might become a "litmus test" for judicial appointments. This concern arises from the Republican platform, which calls for judges "who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life." The first part seems no less offensively specific than Carter's own declared standard of "commitment to equal justice under law," but the second part is a code phrase for opposition to abortion.

As a factual matter, there doesn't seem to be a serious threat of "litmus tests" in a Reagan administration. Reagan is already trying to weasel out of the platform commitment. ("We all ought to have compassion for innocent human life," he says.) Americans Concerned for the Judiciary says that Reagan "would be bound by time-honored tradition to support and implement his Party's platform." Anyone who believes that is a fool (and hasn't read the 1976 Democratic platform lately), and these lawyers are no fools. The three leaders of the Committee for an Independent Judiciary have charged repeatedly that as governor, Reagan forced judgeship candidates to fill out a 20-page questionnaire on their political views. Checking this out, the *New York Times* discovered that it actually was a 20-question questionnaire about health, training, awards, and so on, without even the most general inquiry into legal philosophy. Reagan's successor, Jerry Brown, used the same questionnaire, but added a suspiciously ideological question about free legal services.

More to the point, what is the difference between general legal philosophy and stands on specific issues, and is it a difference liberals would enforce in their own judge selections? Marvin Frankel says, "Our purpose . . . is not to argue for particular results in particular cases, the way the Repubican platform does, but to suggest the kinds of complexities our judges face . . . and the kind of balanced, receptive outlook the task of judging will demand." Does this mean a potential judge could oppose affirmative action, busing, equal rights for women, etc., and still meet Carter's general standard of "commitment to equal justice under law"? I hope not. But if not, what's left of the argument? Even the offensiveness of the "single-issue litmus test" seems to me pretty much a question of whose ox is gored. Many liberals are up in arms about the Republican abortion plank precisely because they consider abortion rights to be a preeminently important issue, not because they feel it has been overemphasized. Would Marion Wright Edelman and Patsy Mink and these other lawyers for progressive and feminist causes endorse a Supreme Court nominee who they knew believed that abortion is a sin? If not, they are applying a single-issue litmus test too.

Liberal Democrats are stupid, as well as dishonest, to make a political issue out of pure merit selection of judges and an ideologically neutral judiciary. This is because conservatives have the better of both these misguided arguments. It is President Carter, after all, who applied racial and sexual criteria to the search for judges. Adding large numbers of blacks and women to the federal bench happens to be one of Carter's most admirable accomplishments. Judges are appointed for life and, of necessity, come from a rather narrow educated elite. The more diversity of life experience you can get within these constraints, the better justice you will provide. Rarely is there one candidate who is clearly more qualified than several others, so favoring minorities and women needn't detract from selection on "merit." In Carter's appointments, it apparently hasn't detracted. But sex and race certainly are considerations *apart from* merit, so it's odd that Carter's supporters should be buying ads warning darkly about the danger of any dilution of the merit principle. It is also demagogic, since there's no reason at all to suppose that Reagan would tend to appoint judges who are intellectually unqualified.

drawing by Mike Keefe

More fundamentally, it is the liberal court decisions of the past 25 years, not the conservative backlash against them, that depart most clearly from the alleged principle of ideological neutrality. Whatever you think of these court actions that have trans-

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formed American life (and I admire almost all), they involved imposing certain values on a populace unwilling to see them imposed through the democratic process. By and large these were liberal values, which is why liberals supported them (and constitutional values, which is why the decisions were correct). But a growing number of others have come to resent these decisions, and feel that the courts have been overreaching. Surely, then, political neutrality for judges is a foolish rallying cry for those who would like to see the trend of a quarter-century continue.

The one really indefensible case of judicial overreaching happens to have concerned the very subject that has aroused the greatest passions on both sides. This was the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. In that decision (written by a Nixon appointee and supported by two others, so you never can tell), the Court virtually threw out all state abortion laws and read into the Constitution a detailed regulation dividing pregnancy into trimesters and setting rules for where, when, and how abortions would be permitted in each.

Americans Concerned for the Judiciary is sending out a fundraising letter to liberals that turns the abortion situation completely on its head. One of two cosigners of the letter is Lawrence Tribe, a constitutional scholar at Harvard Law School. The letter says: "Admittedly abortion poses difficult questions, and debating such questions is in the tradition of American politics. But what is not in the American tradition is imposing such a criterion [views about abortion] on the process of selecting judges." Tribe, who has written about the abortion case, should be ashamed of this crass distortion. The Supreme Court decision his campaign is trying to protect had the precise effect, rightly or wrongly, of removing abortion from the political discourse and imposing a solution by judicial fiat. Opponents of abortion can debate until they're blue in the face, but they can't do anything about it through traditional political means.

Of course abortion opponents don't want a political debate either. They want abortion banned, either by a constitutional amendment or by judges who share their belief that it is murder. But what other choice have they been left? The danger of letting courts do your political work for you, as liberals have been doing, is that someday the courts may fall into the hands of people with different political views; and when that happens, cries of alarm about intolerance and political partisanship will sound very hollow.

There was an earlier quarter-century in which the Supreme Court routinely struck down laws it didn't like regulating worker health and safety, minimum wages, and so on. Marvin Frankel writes in one of the Committee for an Independent Judiciary handouts: "The retrograde decisions of the 1920s and 1930s, establishing the Court as the implacable enemy of social and economic change, deepened the miseries of the Great Depression and came close to destroying the high standing of the Court itself." The implication is that the same thing will happen again if conservatives seize control of the Supreme Court. All conservatives really want is for the courts to stop imposing social and economic change from above. But if they get more ambitious than this, they won't have to look back to the 1920s and 1930s for precedents.

Commenting in this journal on the 1973 abortion decision, Alexander Bickel quoted Oliver Wendell Holmes's famous remark, dissenting from one of those earlier decisions, that the Constitution "is made for people of fundamentally differing views." Bickel went on:

> When he wrote those words, the justices were grinding out annual answers to social and economic questions on the basis of their own convictions of what was wise—derived, as it happens, from the laissez-faire philosophy of Herbert Spencer. That would not do, Holmes told them, and it did not, although it took 30 years for a majority of the justices to see it and Holmes was gone by then. . . . Again, it seems, it may take some time before the realization comes that this will not do.

Now it seems that by the time liberals realize this will not do, the whole matter may be out of our hands. Thus the panic.

Before 1973, abortion reform was a powerful organizing issue for the left, and pro-abortion groups were an effective progressive political force. The right-to-life movement did not exist. Now right-to-lifers are about the strongest political force in the country, and the abortion issue has provided millions of recruits for the right-wing political renaissance. The left, meanwhile, is in disarray. The attempt to rally liberals around the issue of court appointments, and the attempt to disguise ideological views as a high-minded concern for nonpartisanship, shows just how desperate our side has become.

Michael Kinsley

A Fool and His Money

Forging Ahead

Let's hear it for stodgy business types. In the midst of a recession the people at the Bendix Corporation have enough hope in America's future to make the nation's gossip columns with the month's best is-she-or-ain't-she story. Specifically, is that young blonde the chickee-poo of the head of the Bendix Corporation, or is she a talented, competent, and dedicated professional? As soon as the answer comes in, we'll flash a buy or sell sign on the big aerospace company's stock.

In the meantime, for those who rigidly segregrate thoughts having to do with sex and love from those

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having to do with America's real passion—money—man's and woman's eternal pursuit of profit goes on. *Cherchez de l'argent* is not made easier by the upcoming elections. For the investor who wants to vote his pocketbook rather than his ideals, it is not clear who is your friend.

As a general rule governments, like companies, should never borrow money for operating expenses, that is, for the day-to-day costs of salaries, supplies, and other goods and services necessary to run the government. Only for capital goods—buildings, new post offices, highways, things like that—does a judiciously run government borrow. The only exceptions to that rule, in the judgment of smart people like Alexander Hamilton, are emergency situations like wars. Wars always have been treated as an operating cost you do borrow for, but in times past wars have been of limited duration. In World War II we borrowed like hell for four years, but with the cease-fire we were supposed to go back to pay-as-you-go government.

In our era, war, from a financial point of view, has become a permanent condition and therefore something that the fiscally prudent will tell you ought to be treated as an operating cost and paid for by raising taxes. Carter makes no pretense of doing that, even though, heaven knows, he has raised taxes. He still projects possibly very large deficits which he'll have to make up for either by borrowing or by printing money. Either way it is almost a sure thing that interest rates will stay the same or go higher in the next few years. The reason is this. If the government borrows to pay for its new cannons, it will be competing for money with other borrowers—which of course pushes the cost of renting money up. If the government prints money, that is, cranks out more dollars without making more goodies to buy, we have inflation (lenders always charge more for renting money during inflationary times). So investors avoid locking their money into things like long-term certificates of deposit, those deals whereby the banks offer you higher than average interest but you can't touch your money for 36 months.

Or there is Dr. Reagan. He proposes to buy those invisible bombers and ray guns Jimmy Carter keeps announcing he's got coming along, and says he'll do it without a deficit. Indeed, if one correctly apprehends what the idiot savant who once taught Bonzo the chimp to eat bananas is saying, overall federal expenditures will be reduced by some two percent. If you believe a) he's gonna get elected and b) he can do what he says he can do, you should a) vote for him and b) lend every cent you've got, because a couple of years from now you'll be enjoying 13 percent interest in an eight percent interest world.

Both men appear to have similar approaches to helping sick, aged, and moribund industries. Neither man presents a thought-out set of proposals. You can't tell if they are so committed to free trade that they believe in a world free market, that is, one that would allow any nation dominance in those industries it is most efficient and proficient at running. You can't tell how far Reagan or Carter will go toward protectionism, a policy approach which, it if did nothing else, kept the national Republican party almost continuously in office from 1861 to 1933. Apparently the two of them abhor anything like planning with such violent disgust that they can do little more than allow themselves to be reluctantly amenable to emergency rescue operations à la Chrysler and "tax incentives." What this means is lower taxes for companies that modernize their equipment.

If a company is not making any money, then it's not paying any taxes anyway, so such incentives are of scant assistance. Dr. Carter has a little liver pill for the ailment. He proposes to have the government send such companies a check in the amount of the tax money they would have saved if they'd have had any profits to be taxed in the first place. When will a certain type of liberal learn that throwing money at a problem, any problem, is not a way to cure it? Should Congress appropriate money for Carter's pills as part of a medicare program for business gimps, we shall see the indiscriminate subsidizing of worthless, ill-managed, blundering companies on a scale vast enough to make us yearn for the days when we had nothing more pernicious to denounce than welfare cheats.

In theory no industry has more to gain from this uncoordinated bundle of programs than steel. But investors beware. Companies that can't break even without riding around in a government-paid-for wheelchair are not profit vehicles. Chrysler is not a business but social work, a jobs program, and no place for your money.

With or without subsidy, steel isn't tempting to the properly predatory investor. For those who want to invest to help save jobs in Youngstown, the Fool suggests that you give at church, for even with government help troubled industries rarely realize lush profits for their stockholders.

Still, the long-range outlook for steel in America may not be as bad as Walter Cronkite has led you to

Coming:

Getting Rich Off School Kids.

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Nick's Picks . . . Bart's Charts

After six weeks our mythical investment fund was up 35 percent (which, compounded on an annual basis, would have come to a 306 percent increase) and after 11 weeks we were ahead 48 percent (only 228 percent anually). If you believed that we could not maintain this kind of performance over an extended period of time, you were right. At the end of 15 weeks our investments have decreased in overall value for the first time since we began this exercise—down almost $70,000 in one month. This decline is not nearly enough to wipe out the gains of the summer, mind you, but it is still a disheartening reminder that picking the right place to invest is only half the game. You've also got to decide when to get out. Not that we're asking for sympathy just yet. After three rounds we are still up 41 percent (144 percent annually), which is pretty good by any measure—except our previous track record.

While many of our investments lost ground this month, pork bellies futures accounted for most of the slide. It is only fitting that bellies led the way down, since they have accounted for most of our prior gains. Keep in mind, though, that our original investment here was $96,000, so we're still doing nicely with bellies contracts worth over $490,000. Our cattle contracts have provided us with quite a scare during the last four weeks and we have had to keep in close touch with our mythical broker in an attempt to avert financial disaster. We bought contracts worth over $29,000 each on margin for only $1,700 each, with our broker holding the contract as collateral. If our 40,000 pound contracts decline three cents a pound—about 75 percent of our equity—the broker will sell the contracts to recover his own investment. In the last month our contracts frequently have flirted with this three-cent limit. Going into the final weekend of this round it was touch and go. But at the wire they rebounded, leaving us with a nice gain for now, and since Nick von Hoffman is still confident that prices will be going up, we've told our broker that we'll put up whatever money is necessary to keep our cattle investment. Let's hope it's not necessary.

Elsewhere in our fund the only bright spots this month were the Chrysler Financial Corporation bonds and our money market fund, Dreyfus Liquid Assets. For the second consecutive month our Chrysler bonds (K-bonds, no doubt) were up—if ever so slightly—while our other bonds and common stock continued to decline slowly. The interest rate we're earning in our money market fund once again moved up, averaging 9.3 percent for the last month, and 9.7 percent for the last week. That brought us interest of $3,060 for the period, and we should be earning even higher interest in the coming weeks as interest rates climb back into double digits.

For our fourth round of investments we'll put our money into Nucor, the only American company von Hoffman has offered us to choose from—what else could we do with a fund that so far includes real estate stock, gambling and automobile bonds, and food, food, food? Nucor is trading at $60 ⅝, which allows us to buy 1,640 shares for $99,425 with $994 (one percent) going to the broker as commission.

As of October 6, then, our portfolio looks like this:

	September 9	October 6
93 Beatrice Foods bonds	$ 86,490	$ 85,095
64 pork bellies futures on margin	569,754	492,416
156 Chrysler Financial Corp. bonds	99,840	100,815
140 Resorts International bonds	99,925	98,000
58 live cattle futures on margin	98,600	113,216
11,250 shares MONY Mortgage	99,844	94,219
1,640 shares Nucor		99,425
Dreyfus Liquid Assets	427,783	330,424
TOTAL:	$1,482,236	**$1,413,610**

The score so far (since June 30):

Consumer Price Index (estimated)	+2.1 percent
Dow Jones Industrial Average	+8.8 percent
TNR's Fool Fund	+41.4 percent

Bart Rubenstein

Bart Rubenstein is vice president of finance and administration of the Media Commentary Council, Inc.

believe. There is even hope for the lethargic leviathan, the once mighty U.S. Steel Corporation. Worldwide there is more steel-making capacity than there are immediately visible customers, so that companies with older, higher-cost production facilities get badly whacked when demand drops, which it does every so often in this highly cyclical industry. That's been the problem at U.S. Steel, a huge outfit that made too many different kinds of steel at too high a price.

Until very recently it was content to bitch, moan, and demand high tariffs, a complacently seigneurial attitude dating back to the turn of the century, when it enjoyed a virtual monopoly of steel production in America. The 90 percent of the market it controlled when J. P. Morgan created it in 1901 was down to 31 percent by the 1950s and 18 percent, about the same share as foreign imports, last year. At long last management has started closing money-losing plants and getting competitive. It has also been edging out of the steel business into chemicals, thus making the stodgy old giant a little less vulnerable to recessionary setbacks, but it's still a no-buy in your Fool's opinion. Barring a huge jump in war production, the customers aren't there for a big jump in profits, and while U.S. Steel stock is selling for about half the price of four years ago, the odds on it leaping back up aren't good enough to bet hard earned, after-tax dollars on.

There is no reason that some American steel companies can't make money. The old bromides about labor costs being so high here have to be modified. The United Steel Workers will moderate wage demands and even take wage cuts if needed to keep a company alive and competitive. The nub of the difficulty is often lousy management and obsolete technology, although there are some signs that's changing too. The ancient open hearths are being retired and companies like Inland are modernizing. Inland is getting technical advice from Japan's Nippon Kokkan Steel Company, thus proving that some American businessmen, at least, aren't so stiff-necked they won't learn from

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people they used to look down on.

Those that can't modernize surely will die unless a president, Reagan or Carter, is so misguided as to save them. Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel is one such company. It's paid one dividend in five years; the recession has devastated it and the estimated age of its equipment must be near double the industry average.

Kaiser Steel is another company that looks better dead than alive from an investor's point of view. It's been selling off its very valuable holdings in gas, oil, coal, and iron ore so that it has a lot of cash and a creaky California steel plant that can't compete. Recently Kaiser was awarded a chunk of the new Alaska gas pipeline business, but one suspects that was government-arranged charity. Such things can't go on forever. We hope.

Right now, for those who hunger after a steel investment, the Fool suggests a Canadian company, Stelco. They are going to get a nice chunk of that Alaska pipeline business, since a considerable part of the route goes through Canada. They've recently completed the first all-new steel plant to be built in North America in almost a generation, so they have the efficiency to generate profits, profits, profits.

An American firm your Fool recommends is Nucor, a thoroughly modernized steel-maker. Liberals will be delighted to know it has a non-union work force, so nobody's going to get uppity, and a management with a reputation for energy and imagination. Nucor not only makes steel, it also specializes in manufacturing steel joists, decking for factory floors and roofs. If all this tax incentive stuff does result in a big splurge of factory building our guys from Nucor should get their share of the business.

With both Stelco and Nucor you're not buying for the dividends—which ain't much—but with the hope that the price of the stock will zoom skyward and you'll get rich, rich, rich. But don't expect that to happen immediately.

Another stock that doesn't pay much in the way of dividends is Sony. You might want to buy in here on the if-you-can't-lick-'em-join-'em principle. Sony has developed such customer loyalty in the US that it's doubtful consumers will let protectionists keep their merchandise out of the country. Beyond that, Sony's hottest new seller, the Betamax video tape recorder, can't be kept out of the country because no American company has an American machine to market. VTR's with American labels are actually either Sonys or are made by Sony's chief rival, Matshushita. Moreover, there's every reason to think these recorders are going to be the next big home appliance buy. Drop us a line if you get rich.

One more treasonous pick—Bic. Yes, the people who make the ballpoint pens and the disposable cigarette lighters and razors. Bic is almost 60 percent French owned and very definitely French operated. Its people are very tough businessmen who make money by making these products cheaper than anybody else can. They are also first-rate merchandisers, as their principal competitors, the Gillette company, might tell you in a moment of exhausted candor.

Or you can buy American. But only the noble put patriotism over profit.

Nicholas von Hoffman

Nicholas von Hoffman is a syndicated columnist.

How the PLO became a moderate, peace-loving nation.

'Time' Against Israel

by Rael Jean Isaac

For the last seven years, and with accelerating tempo after 1977, *Time* has engaged in vigorous adversary journalism against Israel. In doing so *Time* has practiced subversion—literally, "the turning of a thing upside down or uprooting it from its position." *Time* is not simply inaccurate: it stands facts, words, and moral principles on their heads to achieve its portrait of the Arab-Israel conflict.

Time's coverage of Israel up until 1970 was reasonably balanced. After Nasser's death, *Time* began to shift blame for the stalemate in the Middle East. The 1973 war brought a substantial tilt against Israel, leavened for a while with a certain disarming frankness. Thus on March 10, 1975, *Time* reported that Israel's enemies, in taxing the economies of Israel's friends, were taxing their loyalties, and noted "Western Europe appears willing to bargain away Israel's

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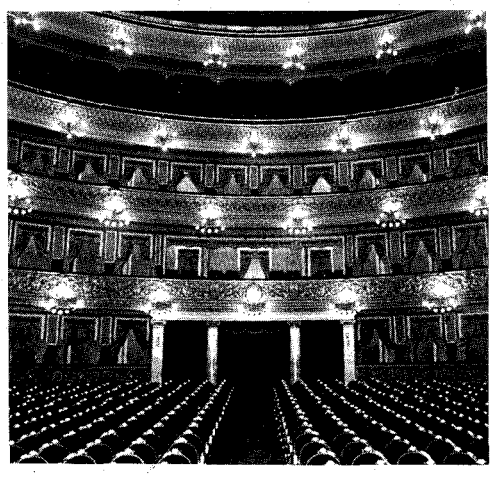
Buenos Aires: 400 Years Young.



One of the world's great cities is celebrating its 400th birthday this year: Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina.

And many of the world's great have come to help celebrate—including Queen Sophia of Spain . . . President Joao Baptista Figueiredo of Brazil . . . Mayor Maurice Ferre of Miami . . . Mayor Tom Bradley of Los Angeles . . . Mstislav Rostropovich and the National Symphony Orchestra . . . Zubin Mehta and the Philharmonic Orchestra of Israel . . . and countless others.

Looking at metropolitan Buenos Aires today, with its nine million inhabitants, soaring skyscrapers, busy factories, bustling airports, crowded theaters and modern hospitals, it is difficult to imagine its birth in 1580 as a tiny village of barely 200 people on an unknown river thousands of miles from civilization.

For nearly 200 years, the town slept until in 1776 the viceroyalty of the Rio de la Plata was created with its seat in Buenos Aires.

Between 1860 and the First World War, European immigrants arrived by the hundreds of thousands, swelling the city's population. In 1905, it was one million; in 1927, it was two million; in 1947, it was nearly 4.7 million, making it the largest Spanish-speaking city in the world.

Why have so many come to live in Buenos Aires? Wouldn't you, if you could live in a city which:

- Is the commercial, industrial, political and cultural center of a dynamic country like Argentina.
- Is one of the largest ports in the world with a waterfront stretching more than five miles.
- Offers opportunity in such industries as food processing, oil refining, metalworks, automobiles, and printing as well as the making of textiles, beverages, paper, paint and chemicals.
- Features more than 12 universities, 50 museums, 500 libraries and 40 theaters, including the world famous Teatro Colon opera house.
- Is ringed with plazas, parks and tree-lined boulevards—and blessed with a year-round temperate climate.
- Boasts more than 50 different *barrios* or neighborhoods—and is the birthplace of the tango and the home of the best steaks in the world.
- Plays almost every sport under the sun, hosting and winning, for example, the 1978 World Soccer Cup at its River Plate Club stadium, the nation's largest.
- Has four TV channels, nine daily newspapers, more than 50 major magazines and 25 publications in foreign languages.

Buenos Aires is a city about which it is easy to use superlatives. And they are all true.

It is the city that never sleeps—the Paris of the Southern Hemisphere—the city with a thousand faces—a city for everyone.

Buenos Aires is a brilliant kaleidoscope of neon, parks, monuments, discos, night clubs, stores, offices and happy vibrant people—and a wonderful city to visit on your next vacation.

Buenos Aires: 400 years young, and yet to reach its full potential.

The Embassy of the Argentine Republic, 1600 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009

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security for access to oil." Only gradually did *Time* internalize constraints into principles. The process was complete by 1980. On April 14 *Time* raised the possibility that the growing number of supporters for the Palestinian cause was, in Israeli ambassador Yehuda Blum's words, "a sorry parade of nations supplicating the Arab oil gods"—only to dismiss this view in the same article as "a dangerous misapprehension of the Begin government." By 1980 it is hard to talk of a dual standard in *Time*: it now has no standards whatsoever in its coverage of the Arab-Israel conflict.

Since 1977, except for a two-week honeymoon in which Begin basked in Sadat's reflected glory after the signing of the peace treaty, Israel has been able to do no right. *Time* reacted to the Israeli elections of May 1977 with a stream of calumny. The new prime minister, Menachem Begin, who had led a parliamentary opposition party for 29 years, was repeatedly described as a "terrorist." In its first major story following the election, *Time* introduced Begin to its readers with the words "rhymes with Fagin." (Why not "Reagan" rather than the anti-Semitic Dickens caricature?) Apparently sending its fact-checkers home so they could not interfere with the rush of editorial inspiration, *Time* went on to report falsely that Begin's men "tortured two British soldiers to death," "massacred," "mutilated," and "raped" innocent villagers, and that Begin himself, after the sinking of the Irgun Ship, the *Altalena*, vowed to "see to it that the state of Israel sinks with us."

On the first anniversary of Begin's election, *Time*'s former Jerusalem bureau chief Donald Neff offered a lengthy evaluation of Israel's prime minister. Neff announced that "all the worst fears, and more, of his critics" had come to pass and that Begin, "more than any other man, has set back the chances for peace in the Middle East." Neff went on to accuse Begin of being inflexible, myopic, hard-lining, deceptive, tiresomely preachy, self-righteously arrogant, and "totally insensitive to any problems beyond those of Jewish Israel." Neff sums up with the title of the *Time* essay, which he attributes to an unnamed diplomat—Begin is "Beyond the Pale."

In the slow negotiations following Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, Begin was repeatedly singled out for blame. On March 6, 1978, *Time* announced that "dispassionate observers" put the blame on Israel; on March 20 that Begin showed "scant willingness to make the kind of concessions that a peace agreement will require"; on September 11 that "Begin does seem to bear by far the greatest responsibility for the current impasse"; on September 18 that "most U.S. officials and experts agree that Begin has been considerably less willing to compromise than Sadat"; and on December 25 that "on balance Israel has been the less compromising and more frustrating negotiating partner." *Time*, unlike other Begin detractors, managed to transform its contempt for Begin into a contempt for Israel itself.

Time judged Sadat in terms of a different set of assumptions and expectations. On January 20, 1978, *Time* reported flatly that Sadat could not be expected to make any concessions: after coming to Jerusalem "he could not give up any more on Sinai, the Palestinian issue or Jerusalem." Sadat's periodic suspensions of the talks did nothing to cloud his image for *Time*; after one such suspension, the magazine editorialized that Sadat had "an almost mystical commitment to the peace process" (March 27, 1978). *Time*'s editors were so carried away by their view of Sadat as visionary peacemaker that they interpreted his assault on Israel on Yom Kippur of 1973 as an expression of his yearning for peace.

> Ironically Sadat started his peace campaign by going to war. The road to peace in the autumn of 1973 seemed totally blocked. . . . To coax some movement toward peace, Sadat made one of his swift, dramatic decisions. He chose to attack Israel.

Even more extraordinary, after the Camp David agreement was signed, *Time* concluded that "it was Begin who conceded the least" (October 2, 1978). Since Begin had given up the Sinai oil fields, air bases, and settlements, and agreed to a companion "framework" for the West Bank and Gaza, while Sadat had compromised on none of his demands (some were temporarily not pressed, such as Jerusalem, on which separate "letters of intent" were filed by the parties to the negotiations), *Time*'s judgment clearly reflected its skewed vision.

What is *Time*'s problem? In part, it is that *Time* does not take Arab statements "for internal consumption" as seriously as it takes those made to Western media and statesmen. That the Arabs want to drive Israel into the sea is old hat. That the PLO, even the fire-eating George Habash, is prepared to accept Israel is "news." But most importantly, *Time* gives weight and credibility to sources who tell the magazine's editors what they want to hear.

Malcolm Toon, formerly US ambassador to Israel and more recently to the Soviet Union, has pointed out that in closed societies (he was speaking of the Soviet Union, but the point applies equally well to the dictatorships of the Middle East) the way to understand the country's strategy is to read

> statements in their own language and to their own people—rather than listening to gossip in the corridors of the United Nations or, worse, to misleading and ambivalent observations by . . . envoys sensitive and responding to the naiveté and wishful thinking of their American interlocutors. . . .

But it is precisely these envoys who too frequently constitute *Time*'s source of information. *Time* habitually quotes Faruq Kaddoumi, for example, the PLO's envoy to the United Nations and Western capitals, whose job it is to present the PLO in an attractive light to foreigners. On October 3, 1977, *Time* asserted that "there was no progress on the basic issues of Israel's refusal to withdraw to its 1967 borders or to accept an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank." If, in the weeks between August 29 and October 3, *Time* had reported the public statements of Arab leaders, it would have been difficult to avoid recognition that the basic question was not Israeli withdrawal but Arab refusal to accept the existence of the state (see sidebar).

Moreover, without the glowing reports of previous weeks on the moderation of Arafat and Habash, *Time* would have found it difficult to treat Israel as a legitimate subject for American pressure. As it is, on October 3 *Time* included a feature "How to Lean on Israel"—remove the exemption of the United Jewish Appeal, cut back on military assistance, deny loans on favorable terms, refuse to deliver a promised nuclear power plant, end joint ventures, reduce support in international forums, abstain on anti-Israel votes in the UN, further publicize US disagreements with Israel, and publicly inquire

Coming:

Washington's Toy Agency.

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The Record: 'Time' vs. Reality

The Foreign Broadcast Information Service is among the most reliable of sources for information on the Middle East. Its *Report on the Middle East and Africa*, one of eight such regional reports available through the Department of Commerce, appears five times a week. During the five-week period between August 29 and October 3, 1977, the Carter administration was trying to find a way to reconvene the Geneva Conference (Sadat did not make his famous trip to Jerusalem until late in November); the Arab states insisted on PLO representation and Israel refused to attend if the PLO attended. *Time*'s coverage was sharply and consistently at odds with FBIS reports during this stage (and most other stages) of the peace process.

Time, August 29: While Israel's Menachem Begin was digging in deeper on the West Bank issue, off in Beirut his Palestinian foes last week took a big if unheralded step toward peace. *Time* has learned that after extensive negotiations . . . the so-called Palestinian 'rejectionists' have decided to end their defiant stand against peace on any terms with Israel and agree with the larger Palestine Liberation Organization on the goal of securing an independent state on the West Bank and in Gaza. . . . The deal was crucial. . . . [T]he continuing holdout of the rejectionists, notably the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, headed by hard-lining George Habash, had muddled the Palestinian position. . . . [O]ne of the rejectionists explained 'We feel this is the time for the Palestinians to stand together.

FBIS, September 12, Algiers: Interview with George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. 'We reject it [242] because the Palestinian struggle is based on the premise that Palestine is an Arab country afflicted with Zionist colonialism. The armed Palestinian revolution will continue until the complete liberation of Palestinian soil is achieved.'

Time, August 29: 'We're not blocking peace,' says a P.L.O. spokesman, 'Israel is.' To press that point Yasser Arafat plans . . . to push for a new UN resolution . . . [which] will meet Carter's injunction by explicitly accepting 242, but it will also include his very words on the Palestinian homeland. 'We would be very much surprised if the U.S. vetoes the President's own language.'

FBIS, September 26, Algiers: Abu Hassan, PLO representative in Algeria, asked about the PLO attitude to 242 said: 'The PLO says no. Israel is an alien body in the Arab sea. This body is bound to disappear given the effective medicine—a united Arab front.'

Time, September 19: In a rare show of unanimity 21 Foreign Ministers of the Arab League adopted in Cairo what one Western diplomat called 'the last hurrah of the moderates.' He meant an 8 point working paper. . . . Significantly the document distinguishes between territory occupied after the 1967 war and Israel's 1948 boundaries—a tacit admission that Israel has a right to exist as a state.

FBIS, September 7, Riyadh: Arab Foreign Ministers approved an 8 point working paper prepared by the Arab League Political Committee. . . . It called on all states to give no aid to Israel and to halt immigration to 'the occupied Palestine and Arab territories.' [This call to countries to forbid emigration of their citizens to Israel obviously does not distinguish between Israel's boundaries before and after the 1967 war.—R.J.I.]

FBIS, September 8, Riyadh: Saudi Arabia's Information Minister Muhammad Yamani reaffirmed Saudi Arabia's position on the Palestinian question referring to foreign press campaigns casting doubt on the kingdom's position. Crown Prince Fahd had underscored to President Carter the kingdom's support for 'the full rights and demands of the Palestinians written with their own hands.' [This is a reference to the Palestinian Covenant, 13 of whose 32 articles call for the destruction of Israel.—R.J.I.]

Time, October 3: One bar to P.L.O. participation [at Geneva] is Washington's insistence that the organization endorse United Nations Resolution 242, which calls for 'secure border' for all nations in the area—an implicit recognition of Israel's right to exist. The P.L.O. has refused to accept the resolution since it refers to the Palestinians as refugees rather than as a nation with rights.

FBIS, September 12, Algiers: Interview with George Habash. 'Our rejection [of 242] does not stem from the consideration that 242 only talks of refugees but that it talks of recognition of Israel and secure borders.'

FBIS, September 12, Cairo: Zuhair Mohsen [head of military operations for the PLO] again rejected 242 because according to him 'it recognizes Israel's right to exist.'

R.J.I.

about the treatment of what *Time* calls "political prisoners." (*Time* repeatedly talks of thousands of "political prisoners," the term suggesting that these are individuals imprisoned for their opinions. These are individuals sentenced for crimes, including formation of PLO cells and attacks on Israeli civilians. The term "political prisoner" is no more appropriate in this case than it is to the convicted criminals in the United States dubbed "political prisoners" by Andrew Young.)

In seizing almost exclusively upon Arab "private" statements, *Time* in these five weeks was not simply providing partial information, but "disinformation," information deliberately provided to mislead Western media about Arab, and especially PLO, intentions. Nothing that *Time* claimed had happened or was about to happen actually transpired then or later. The October 10 edition of *Time* did not admit that it had been misinforming its readers for weeks; instead it announced that a PLO resolution, reaffirming an earlier 1974 resolution, was "more moderate in tone" because in calling for a state to be created on any soil given up by Israel, it dropped the 1974 clause that designated such a state a base for further struggle against Israel. This was wrong: the PLO had explicitly renewed the 1974 resolution in its entirety. But what is more interesting is that *Time* finally allowed its readers to know that a state in the West Bank and Gaza had been specifically designated by the PLO as a base against Israel only when it erroneously reported that the clause had been dropped. Up to this point *Time* had repeatedly described the readiness to establish a state in land relinquished by Israel as proof of PLO "moderation."

Time eventually grew tired of falsely predicting that the PLO "will drop the most offensive passages from its Covenant" immediately prior to PLO or Palestine National Council meetings. There is no reference in *Time* to the meeting on May 31, 1980, of Al Fatah, repeatedly described by *Time* as the most "moderate" of the PLO's constituent organizations, at which it rededicated itself to the liquidation of the Zionist entity, "politically, economically, militarily, culturally and ideologically." Nor does *Time* ever explain why the PLO is so reluctant to change the Covenant, despite repeated predictions that it will be altered. Nor will readers learn from *Time* that on February 21,

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1980, Nabil Ramlawi, the PLO's London representative, stated that the Covenant "is no less vital to the PLO than is the Proclamation of Independence and the Law of Return to the Zionists," nor that on March 4, 1980, the PLO's Abu Ayyad asserted "it is impossible to alter the Covenant"; nor that on March 26, 1980, PLO spokesman Abu Sharar asserted that the Palestinian Covenant "defines the PLO's struggle." In other words the destruction of Israel is the central demand Palestinian Arabs make on themselves, other Arabs, and the world. The obligation to "liquidate the Zionist entity" is as "sacred" to the PLO as national independence is to Israel.

Time replaced its predictions about changes in the PLO covenant with reports that the PLO has "de facto" recognized, is recognizing, or will recognize Israel. As recently as October 6, 1980, under a headline "Arafat's Nudge: Inching Towards Recognition?" *Time* reported that Arafat, at a communist-sponsored peace conference in Bulgaria, spoke to four Israelis. *Time* finds this a highly significant event and asserts that the "decision of the PLO leader to make so conciliatory a gesture" lends credence "even to some Israelis" to a remark made by Morocco's King Hassan the previous week that the PLO was ready to accept Israel. While *Time* points out that the Israelis were members of the Communist party, it fails to mention that the Israeli Communist party is the channel through which Israeli Arab Nationalists express their rejection of the Jewish state. No wonder Arafat said he was happy to meet "the peace forces of Israel."

But *Time* is not content with subverting the facts. *Time*'s use of words like "peace," "moderation," and "democracy" verges on Orwellian doublethink. Prior to President Sadat's 1977 visit to Israel, a time when there was no indication that any Arab state was willing to make peace with Israel, *Time* informed its readers week after week that the Arabs sought "peace." On May 9, 1977, *Time* reported that Jordan's King Hussein was "pessimistic about Israel's willingness to make peace"; on May 23 that Assad of Syria said a Palestinian state was necessary for "peace"; and on July 25 that Arab nations "sincerely believe that the only road to peace leads through the White House." After Sadat's visit, when the Arab states mounted a virtually solid rejectionist front, *Time* continued to assert that "peace" was their target. On December 5, 1977, *Time* wrote that although the rhetoric from Damascus was "pure vitriol," Assad "basically is as committed to peace talks as Sadat." Although by mid-1978 Hussein had made clear his unwillingness to negotiate with Israel, *Time*'s conclusion on May 29, 1978, was that Hussein felt Carter was incapable of obtaining the concessions needed "to permit a peace settlement."

Time never explores what it is that Arab leaders mean when they say they seek "peace." But Iraqi president Ahmad al Bakr had already performed this service quite succinctly. "We hope the forces of peace will strengthen their struggle of solidarity with the Arab liberation movement," said al Bakr, "and will work toward the liquidation of the imperialist Zionist aggression." Syria's Assad also defined peace in an interview with an Arabic paper: "The October War expressed our will to regain occupied Arab land and the Palestinian Arab people's usurped rights. Anyone who fights for the homeland is a fighter for peace." When in September 1977, 21 Arab foreign ministers called for peace based on the right of return, of self-determination, and of an independent state, *Time* described it as "the last hurrah of the moderates." But the foreign ministers were merely reiterating the PLO formula which had been devised in 1964, three years before Israel captured the West Bank and Gaza. *Time*'s "last hurrah of the moderates" was well understood in the Arab world as a call for peace to follow the destruction of Israel. The PLO also clarified its understanding of peace. The Palestine National Council has asserted that it refuses to accept UN Resolution 242 because it recognizes "a partial peace" instead of "a permanent peace." A partial peace, as the PLO defines it, exists while Palestinian rights have not been realized in full. Permanent peace is the liquidation of Israel.

DEMOCRACY IS another term which *Time* applies in extraordinary fashion to the Arab world. *Time* entitles its October 24, 1977, article on the PLO, "Democracy Gone Wild." *Time*'s headline certainly suggests that something is amiss, but the average *Time* reader is not likely to feel that too much democracy warrants excessive censure. According to *Time*, Arafat was only the first among three million Palestinian equals and maintained his leadership by "force of personality." *Time* did take note of conflicts among rival groupings and asserted that in moments of "extreme crisis for the PLO debate is suspended and democracy begins (or ends) at the barrel of a gun." But surely the point of democracy is that even in moments of crisis, decisions are made by votes, not guns.

Time's depiction of the PLO as a democracy cannot be discounted as a one-time aberration. On May 14, 1980, *Time* called the 100-member Palestine National Council "probably the most democratic institution in the Arab world." But there are no elections in Palestinian camps; ironically, the most democratic institutions in the Arab world are the elected city councils on the Israeli-occupied West Bank, made up primarily of Palestinian hard-liners. The only Arab press operating in conditions of relative freedom is also in the West Bank or in Israel proper. (Scarcely less remarkable is *Time*'s use of the term "desert democracy" for Saudi Arabia (May 22, 1978). Though *Time* admits that Saudi Arabia has no parliament, no parties, not a single elected official, and that absolute power resides in the hands of the royal family, Saudi Arabia is "democratic" because even humble subjects have access to the ruler, to whom they can present complaints.)

Time takes up another treasured term of Western democracy, "self-determination," only to subvert its meaning. According to *Time*, the chief obstacle to a comprehensive peace is Israel's reluctance to grant the Palestinians what *Time* calls "true self-determination." But to Americans self-determination subsumes freedom of speech, a free press, and a multi-party system which gives the people the ability to change the men responsible for creating public policy. As political scientist Paul Eidelberg has observed, the "self-determination" exercised in Arab countries is that of ruling cliques—not at all what Americans have in mind by the term. Were the Palestinian Arabs to exercise self-determination, not only would their form of government deny the freedoms that give self-determination meaning, but that government would be committed to the destruction of Israel—the only country in the Middle East where those freedoms are enjoyed. (If *Time* means "national self-determination," Flemings and Walloons in Belgium, Welsh and Scots in England, Basques in Spain, Bretons and Corsicans in France, Kurds in Iraq, and Pushtus in Pakistan all would qualify better for sovereignty than the Arabs of Palestine.)

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Even the simple word "moderate" is shorn of traditional meaning. As early as January 27, 1975, *Time* reported that the moderates "dominate the PLO." For several years thereafter *Time* variously described Arafat as "relatively moderate," "somewhat moderate," and just plain "moderate." When, following Sadat's trip to Jerusalem, the PLO murdered an Egyptian representative, *Time* had doubts. The solution: on March 27, 1978, *Time* reported that Arafat and the PLO have returned to a "policy of militancy" after "3½ years of relative moderation." Arafat was a "moderate" suffering from radical pressures. Arafat was restored to full-fledged moderation on May 15, lost the title temporarily after the Camp David agreements (on September 18, 1978, the PLO is actually described as "radical"), and regained it on January 29, 1979, when he was described as "relatively moderate."

SINCE ARAFAT is the leader of the world's major terrorist organization, it is reasonable to ask by what criteria *Time* judges him to be moderate. The answer, presumably, is "in relation to George Habash." By this token Stalin and Hitler could be called moderates, for both were pikers in mass murder compared to Mao Zedong who, according to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, may have been responsible for the death of twice as many people as these two European dictators combined. In any case there is no evidence that Habash is responsible for more murders than Arafat or would, if he could, inflict a harsher fate on the Jews of Israel. The differences between the two men seem to be simply on the level of short-range tactics.

Time similarly divides the Arab states into moderates and radicals without discernible reason for doing so. Since moderates and radicals do not differ in their attitude to Israel, one might suppose that *Time* was dividing these countries on the basis of their attitude to the United States—except that Syria, a Soviet client, is a perennial *Time* "moderate." When, following Sadat's trip to Jerusalem, *Time*'s moderates joined the rejectionists, *Time* solved the dilemma by simply continuing to call some of the rejectionists moderate. Thus on July 24, 1978, *Time* talks of Egypt's "moderate Arab allies" when they were nowhere in sight. *Time* supplies a running series of apologies for the moderates: the Saudis "could not" publicly support Sadat because of their concern that this would help the Soviet Union (December 12, 1977), Hussein wants to remain "an uncommitted moderating force" (December 26, 1977), Camp David "caught the moderate Arabs by surprise" (October 2, 1978). Why joining the rejectionists to attack Israel, Egypt, and the United States would hurt the Soviet Union or contribute to the cause of moderation, *Time* does not explain. Saudi Arabia's call for a *jihad* against Israel in August 1980 did not impair its moderate credentials for *Time*.

Although there is no state about which *Time* writes more respectfully, it is hard to see why Saudi Arabia should ever have been given the title of "moderate" in relation to the Arab-Israel conflict. Second to none in anti-Israel sentiment, chief bankroller of the PLO, it is of all Arab states the most viciously anti-Semitic. Before reaching its present state of obsequiousness, even *Time* noted (April 7, 1975) that King Faisal handed out the notorious Protocols of the Elders of Zion to visitors and that Saudi Arabia routinely refuses Jews entry to the country.

Time's use of "moderate" is even more bizarre when contrasted with its use of "intransigent." *Time* applies that word very sparingly to the Arab world: after 1977 it is used only to describe George Habash and the Iraqi leadership. But Israel is called "intransigent" so frequently that the word takes on the character of a Homeric epithet. When *Time* wanted to castigate South Africa's then prime minister Vorster, the Israeli prime minister was the only figure of sufficient turpitude to offer a worthy parallel: Vorster was "as intransigent as Golda Meir" (June 27, 1977).

Semantic subversion of a more subtle sort is apparent in *Time*'s treatment of "terrorism." As early as March 17, 1975, in an article describing a PLO attack on the Savoy Hotel in Tel Aviv, *Time* variously calls those who staged the assault "commandoes," "*fedayeen*," and "guerrillas"—and uses the word "terrorists" only when quoting an Israeli statement. (In the same issue there is an article on the Baader-Meinhof: here *Time* has no hesitation in speaking of a "terrorist gang" engaged in "terrorist acts.") Sometimes *Time* does not even seem too sure if attacks on Israeli civilians should be termed terror at all. In an October 31, 1977, article on the problem of world terror *Time* declares that the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine is the most likely of the six major groups in the PLO "to spearhead a resurgence of terror." Since terrorist operations against Israel by all these groups had continued unabated, this suggested that assaults on Israel did not count.

ANOTHER WAY *Time* removes the PLO's sting is by describing it as a social welfare organization. On July 18, 1977, *Time* reports on the PLO's factories that provide jobs for disabled *fedayeen* and Palestinian women in "handicrafts, ready-to-wear clothing, furniture building and filmmaking." On April 14, 1980, *Time* reports that the PLO "runs hospitals and clinics, dispenses social security benefits, sponsors trade unions and even associations for writers, poets and painters." *Time* lets us know (nice touch) that the PLO makes toys.

More important, by using "Palestinians" and "PLO" as interchangeably as "United States" and "Uncle Sam," *Time* gives the reader the impression that all Palestinians are PLO terrorists—or that the PLO is a nation seeking "self-determination." In the 1977 article on world terror, *Time* includes "the Palestinians" as one of five major terror organizations outside West Germany. Terrorism by the Palestinians can be expected to continue, says *Time*, if they "are not suitably represented at a Geneva peace conference." But for the most part *Time*'s accent is on showing that the PLO are the Palestinians. Can four million people be terrorists? (*Time* rapidly escalates its estimate of the number of Palestinians: on October 24, 1977, there are three million Palestinians; on December 5, 1977, less than two months later, there are 3.4 million; three months after that, on March 27, 1978, there are 3.8 million, and on April 14, 1980, there are "nearly four million.") If, as *Time* repeatedly tells its readers, the Palestinians are a people seeking self-determination, and the PLO are the Palestinians, it follows that the PLO is a nation, not a terrorist organization.

The cumulative effect of *Time*'s misuse of words is perhaps more serious than its inversion of facts. While the reader of *Time* may not learn the true facts elsewhere, he certainly could absorb the information if presented with it. But when new meaning is given to words, the impact is below the level of consciousness. What *Time* has done to the reader's vision of the world through the corrupt use of language is probably irremediable.

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Mod and Victorian

Can American film fate really be as cut-and-dried as Claudia Weill's new picture makes it seem—yet again? Two years ago she directed *Girlfriends*, a small-scale, uneven, but genuine film about a young woman's life in New York. It had some success; so Hollywood, as they love to say, beckoned. Now we get her first Hollywood picture, *It's My Turn*. Is the chance for fulfillment in American film *really* as hopeless as the change in Weill's work makes it appear?

No, there's hopeful evidence even in this meager year, but *It's My Turn* seems to have been made by someone else with the same name. It's false and foolish from beginning to end, except when it's trite. A young woman, a math professor in Chicago who lives with a builder, visits New York and has an affair there with a prematurely retired baseball player. (The fact that he's a ball player takes the script out of inertia into phoniness—a herniated attempt to inject color and novelty.) She wants to cling; he wants to be unclung. She returns to Chicago unable to continue with the builder. At the end she has no lover, though there's a hint that the ball player will reappear. But who cares? Nothing in this film becomes it like the leaving it.

The screenplay by Eleanore Bergstein can't even be called a failure: it's not clear what she failed at. A theme can be invented: a modern woman discovers that she's more dependent on men than she realized and is forced further into independence. ("Characterization" consists of her being clumsy: she drops her scarf in the opening shot and bobbles things throughout. Insecurity under the surface assurance? Wow.) But the people and the development don't exist: the script contains only some data which don't contradict that possible theme.

Most of the Chicago beginning takes place in one set, the loft where the prof lives with her man, and nothing much happens other than factual exposition embarrassedly wrapped in hip joking. She goes to New York for a job interview and for her father's wedding, and we know that, one place or the other, possibly both, she's got to meet another man. What else could the picture be about after that start? He enters, the unbelievable ball player, and the cutenesses—of their meeting and kissing and scrapping and bedding—are like an antique ritual dug up and dusted off by a cinema archaeologist. The film's abrupt ending is meant to be tersely implicative like the ending of much modern fiction, but it fizzles because we haven't been caring.

I don't look at Weill as a lamb who fell among wolves. Obviously she accepted that Bergstein script, and probably she had something to do with the writing. But—or and—she got involved with two people, both women, whom I consider among the deadliest figures in film today. The executive producer was Jay Presson Allen, whose last contribution to the gaiety of nations was her screenplay of *Just Tell Me What You Want* (*TNR*, February 16, 1980), adapted from her own novel and co-produced by her. She is an ace glitzer of trash, traducing even the authenticity of old Movieland formulae by sprinkling spurious modernity and diluted seriousness over them. Then there is Jill Clayburgh, the absolutely perfect Allen actress, who plays the lead. Horrid in *Luna* and *An Unmarried Woman*, Clayburgh bombs out again here because she lacks the script's basic requirement: to make us wish we were that woman (if you're female) or that we were with her (if you're not). To me Clayburgh is physically unattractive—not an irrelevant remark about a purportedly romantic figure—smug in manner, and a completely routine actress.

Charles Grodin, the Chicago lover, does his cabaret-style comedy a bit more restrainedly than usual. Michael Douglas, the ball player (I can hardly type those words without cracking up), is feisty but thin, boyish, not a persona of romance even in casually macho terms.

As for Weill, it's easy to imagine the problems that came her way, along with the offers, after *Girlfriends*, but even they don't explain why *It's My Turn* was made with every camera and cutting platitude in the well-thumbed book, especially the lovemaking scenes. And I don't see why we have to excuse or thank her just for proving once more that there are heavy pressures in our film world. It's impossible to remain "small" and personal? OK, now she's "big" and anonymous. Thinking hard of the best in *Girlfriends*, I hope it's not permanent.

The first minute of *The Elephant Man* is awful. So it's a surprise that the next half hour or so is pretty good. But the rest of it is almost as bad as the opening.

That first minute shows us, mistily, John Merrick's mother being frightened by an elephant when she was pregnant. As an explanation of his disfigurement—which he believes—it's scientifically loony, and as film, it's ludicrous. Then, for a while, the camera of Freddie Francis, guided by the director David Lynch, gives us the dank brick of Victo-

Films Worth Seeing

Airplane! It starts being funny with that exclamation point, and it rarely lets up.

The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith. An Australian half-caste, c. 1900, is driven by injustice to murder. Less than the tragedy it wants to be, but rich: and wonderfully acted.

Divine Madness. A filmed Bette Midler performance. I can't believe I'm really recommending it—it's got so much in it that's stupid or merely dirty—but she has strong talent, and a lot of the time she's smart.

The Great Santini. Mixed in this patchwork picture are some excellent scenes of family life, particularly father-son tussles. Good actors.

SK

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rian London so graphically that we feel rubbed against it. (Properly, the whole film is in black and white. Francis and Lynch clearly studied Victorian photographs carefully.) Through this section the screenplay by Christopher DeVore and Eric Bergren and Lynch is laying out its ground vividly enough; but when it wants to swing into action, it doesn't. It repeats and drags, seems only tenuously impelled by an idea, is written in flabby language.

The script is not based on Bernard Pomerance's now well-known play; both are derived from the same factual sources. Pomerance's play, I continue to think, has merit. There's some sogginess in the dialogue, some patness in arrangement, some imbalance in structure. (The real drama is in Treves, the doctor, not in Merrick, who is only a victim without possibilities, but Merrick is so much more eye-catching that Treves fades.) Still Pomerance uses some deft ellipses, some nice irony—in, for instance, Merrick's building of a model of the church across the way; and much of the writing is astringent, tart, suggestive.

The screenplay's dialogue has, comparatively, no flavor at all: it's merely loose talk. (And "contact" is used as a verb in 1884. And there's a reference to "The London *Times*"—in London.) The church model becomes just a hobby. The visits of the star actress, Mrs. Kendal, which in the play were at least theatrically effective, are stupid. (And Mrs. Kendal is played by Anne Bancroft, right off the Bronx subway. Her husband, Mel Brooks, was one of the backers.)

The play, well or less well, grapples with an immense theme: the arbitrariness of life, its lack of design or reason, posed against what we are capable of expecting. "Man's great blessing/curse, the gift of logic," (to quote myself), "keeps ramming into the illogic of existence." The film, nebulously, barely visibly, is about a lesser but good idea: man's fear of that arbitrariness, a fear that takes derisive or "scientific" or sanctimonious form. The night porter at Merrick's hospital sells places to pub pals to peer at the Elephant Man. (Dreadfully heavyhanded direction in those scenes.) Treves gets professional status by discovering and exhibiting Merrick, and Treves's hospital gets renown by sheltering him. Society, even royalty, brings gifts and feels noble about it. All these are ways of gaping in fear at a gap in the design of existence. But this theme is not cultivated and harvested. After it's set, it's just reiterated over and over until the fact of iteration obscures it. (And what was the significance of all that smoke issuing from factories and trains and steamers? Is *any* visual theme a valid theme?)

John Hurt, behind a swollen helmet of makeup, does as well as possible in the title role, though his inflections are a bit subtle for a man who has spoken so little. The play deals better with both face and voice. The stage Merrick wears

(continued on page 40)

Robert Brustein on theater

The Vitality of Harold Clurman

The American theater has suffered many losses this year, but none so impoverishing as the death of Harold Clurman. A sound theater critic and an inspiring stage director, Clurman will perhaps be best remembered as the prime begetter of the Group Theater, which, flourishing in the 1930s, created the foundation for a whole new American stage tradition (Clurman chronicled its history in that splendid account of early triumph and eventual disappointment, *The Fervent Years*). Clurman, who began his theater career as a reader with the Theater Guild, provided the inspiration, the aesthetic, the purpose, and, above all, the energy for this revolutionary theater organism. A voluble talker and dynamic intellectual, he had the capacity to identify and attract likeminded theater artists and, in a culture not particularly notable for its collective strengths, created the conditions—for at least a decade—in which such intrinsically independent spirits as Stella and Luther Adler, Clifford Odets, Bobby Lewis, John Garfield, Elia Kazan, and Franchot Tone could work and develop together as a collaborative unit.

Clurman not only led the group, he staged many of its productions. But like his artistic leadership, his production process was largely a matter of exhortation and indoctrination. Some say he talked plays onto the stage; others say he occasionally talked plays off it; but his genius for speechifying was the real adhesive of his ensemble. How this adhesive became unstuck is the real subject of *The Fervent Years*, and constitutes its most melancholy commentary. Clurman knew precisely where his company had succeeded; he also knew where it had failed. He was aware that the Group had made a crucial error in trying to work within the commercial theater system, since this decision made its survival as dependent as any Broadway producer on creating hits . The real cause of the Group's demise, however, was not economic but cultural: the defection of its now successful members to Hollywood and Broadway. It was Clurman's depressing fate to watch the insurrection he had started in the heart of the American theater become the basis for its reigning aesthetic, as Group actors and writers joined the stage and movie establishment, and another of its members, Lee Strasberg, used its Stanislavsky-based techniques to train stars for movies, TV, and the commercial stage (later starting a chain of acting

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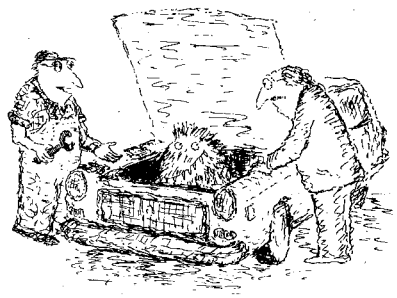

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studios all over the country on the model of Arthur Murray).

Clurman responded to the extinction of his theater by becoming a Broadway director himself, staging not only American plays—*A Member of the Wedding* and *Incident at Vichy* were among his more notable achievements—but many European works as well. The Group Theater had limited its offerings to new American plays. Now Clurman became largely responsible for bringing the plays of such French Boulevard writers as Anouilh and Giraudoux to the attention of New York theatergoers—for which service the French government gratefully awarded him its Légion d'Honneur.

Clurman was something of a boulevardier himself. Having consciously developed the persona of a dashing, flamboyant regisseur on the order of Diaghelev, he usually appeared in public with a black slouch hat, a silver-headed cane, and a stylish overcoat proudly adorned with his French ribbon. Short and somewhat stocky, with flat Russian features which included a pair of shrewd, veiled eyes, Clurman was hardly a conventionally handsome man, but he gave an impression of such confidence about his own personal magnetism that he was able to hypnotize women into regarding him as an irresistible lover. As drama critic for the *Nation*—a position he held for many years after serving briefly as theater critic for this magazine—he would sashay down the aisle of a theater, usually with a striking young girl on his arm, greet a large number of friends and admirers along the way, then take his seat with a great flourish and hold forth before the curtain rose, in a loud voice, about the virtues of the actors he was about to see and the shortcomings of his colleagues in the aisles—particularly the current critic for the *New York Times*, whom he characterized (in a reference to the man's voluminous output) as "the best typewriter in America."

Clurman had a capacity, lacked by many of us second-night bruisers, to speak his opinions without leaving blood on the floor. As a theater man, he knew how easy it was to wound people who made a living exposing themselves on stage, and while he rarely lost his heart to actors, he never cut their hearts up either. His criticism was always gentle, mellow, and instructive—offered with a caress rather than inflicted with a scalpel. As one of the scalpel-wielders of this time, I sometimes thought he was too gentle, suspecting that his friendships with people of the theater were softening his judgments. Only later did I learn that these were the qualities of his temperament, and that only a genuinely kind man could have navigated so well the treacherous shoals between the Scylla of practice and the Charybdis of perception. His kindness and generosity extended even to his own critics, as I can personally attest. Once, after I had made some ungracious remarks about his style in one of my articles, and then sent him a copy of a book in which

Harold Clurman by Alfred Stieglitz

these were included, he responded by commending the work highly despite my harsh comments—adding good-naturedly that the only thing he disagreed with was my judgment of him.

By the time I had the sense to invite Harold Clurman to teach at the Yale Drama School, he was disqualified by virtue of age from holding an academic post; nothing better demonstrated the shortsightedness of the university's retirement regulations. He did come up—about once every other year—to lecture to our students, and invariably exhausted us all with his limitless gusto and energy. Speaking without notes, without so much as a breath between sentences, he would launch into some tirade about the current state of the theater, flailing his arms like a windmill, shouting at the top of his lungs, huffing and puffing like an enormous human bellows. And he was no less mercurial in the living room than in the lecture hall. Listening to him talk was tantamount to being trapped in a wind tunnel where you found yourself whipped about by gusts and blasts of ideas, not to mention passions, opinions, anecdotes, jokes, exhortations. Despite his own learning and intellectual bent, he held an idea of the theater that was of the flesh, fleshly. "The stage is life, music, beautiful girls, legs, breasts," he would roar at us, gesticulating sharply and narrowing his eyes into a mischievous ogle, "not talk or intellectuality or dried up academicism." As a result of these opinions, Clurman sometimes struck our more hypercritical students as a bit of a middle-brow, especially when he submitted as a "shocking avowal" his discovery that "*Waiting for Godot* is a more significant play than *The Diary of Anne Frank*." Nor were they impressed by his unembarrassed commitment to the theater as "a place of entertainment." But Clurman was simply trying to convey his sense of the stage as an affirmation of life. "Art alone does not create art," he once wrote. "Our living experience is what matters most. I am hospitable to all forms of theater which spring from a life-inspired and life-giving source."

Clurman himself was one of these "life-inspiring and life-giving" sources, but it was impossible not to worry about his health whenever he started talking. Surely no human arteries could endure such exertions, no human heart could take such strains. To see Clurman survive his own lectures was to believe in the indestructibility of the natural tissue, the invincibility of the mortal flesh. When I heard that he had died, I assumed that he had pushed his energy too far, and that Death had clapped him on the shoulder in the middle of a speech. But when he reached age 78, his heart was still strong, his blood pressure still sound. He died instead of an overhospitality to life, from a multiplication of cancer cells within his body. To the end, he was creating energy and inspiration. He had had a theater on 42nd Street named after him; he had recently completed a book on Ibsen and was hard at work on a book on O'Neill; he was still reviewing plays. It's difficult to believe he wasn't holding forth, and brilliantly, until his final moment.

Shrewd but kindly, penetrating but humane, Clurman had the same combination of warmheartedness and tough-mindedness as Chekhov—a playwright whose works he did not have the chance to stage. It is sad enough that the Group never produced *Uncle Vanya* or *The Cherry Orchard* (and puzzling, too, since Chekhov and Stanislavsky were its patron

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saints). But by the time Clurman was prepared to direct such plays, he was working in a Broadway that had lost its nerve. Clurman criticized this Broadway from within its walls. Beginning as a theater revolutionary, he evolved into a bridge between intelligent people and the commercial theater. The bridge was down for quite a few years before he died, but Clurman never ceased his efforts to rebuild it. Without his generative presence, the commercial stage has lost an important spur to its intent, criticism has lost a major voice, and all of us who work in the theater have lost a warm, ebullient friend.

Our writers are talented, but their books will not last.

American Writing Now

by Alfred Kazin

Well over 40,000 books were published in the United States last year. No one can blame the *New York Times Book Review*, *The New Republic*, the *New York Review of Books*, certainly not the fragmentary book supplements indifferently included by Sunday newpapers in Chicago, Washington, San Francisco, for commenting on few of these books and for listing just a handful. Editors and reviewers have their own tastes; New York sophisticates are not more likely to see, much less to discuss, a book of western history published by the University of Montana Press than *Penthouse*, *Hustler*, *Screw*, etc. are to publish a serious review of some new edition of Sigmund Freud.

Like so much in American life, the book world is big, busy, commercial, driven; not likely to be too aware of its compulsiveness, special interests, many blinders. If complaints are made adjacent to the publishing world, they are made by a few writers and still independent publishers about the increasing domination of the trade by toy companies and the margarine trust. If complaints are made about the state of American writing, they are usually aired in small academic quarterlies by "experimental" writers whose most notable trait, as Edmund Wilson said of Cyril Connolly, is "that whether it's peace or war, Cyril complains it keeps him from writing."

So much in American cultural life now depends on money from the government, the conglomerates, the foundations, that I could reel off examples of commercialization and stop in perfect satisfaction. In good populist fashion I could locate in the big money the prime reason why there are so few real bookstores left even in New York that the Columbia University bookstore is now another Barnes and Noble supermarket featuring paperbacks and best sellers. Nor can we forget the unequaled oppression suffered by upper-bourgeois and professional women with tenured husbands who have rallied to the support of Marilyn French's *The Woman's Room* (2.7 million in paperback), and Judy Blume's *Wifey* (3.5 million). Judith Krantz three months before the March 9 publication of *Princess Daisy* earned nearly five million dollars. I open a press release about Erich Segal's "new blockbuster," 10 years after *Love Story*, *Man, Woman and Child*, to learn the publication plans for this story of a loving marriage on the brink of tragedy: 200,000 copies on the first printing, $200,000 initial advertising budget. The book is already a Literary Guild alternate, a Doubleday Book Club selection, a Reader's Digest Condensed Book Club selection, a Family Circle excerpt. Foreign language rights have been sold for "record figures" to France, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Portugal, Spain.

Which goes to show you—what? Nothing we do not already know about "the feminine readers who control the destinies of so many novels," as *Harper's* noted on declining *Sister Carrie* in 1900, nothing new about the lure of the big buck in publishing as in academia, the meat business, the David Merrick business. Do any of these stray items explain why you will almost never see a grown-up man in business carrying

Alfred Kazin's most recent book is *New York Jew*.

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even a best seller? Why college students are obliged to "explicate" James Joyce and Ezra Pound without knowing where a sentence should end—or begin? Why American publishers are so ruthless about remaindering their books? Why the paperback industry, pulping books the second they cease to be "blockbusters," resembles nothing so much as the meat factory in Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*?

The million-dollar advances and earnings, the money-mindedness that leaves its grease stain on every discussion of a "popular" book (and of a markedly unpopular one)—these, along with the widespread contempt for politics, the breakdown of intellectual authority that gives every sexual and ethnic faction the brief authority of anger, are not just symptoms of some profound cultural malaise—they are the malaise. The malaise is the new book supermarkets that will give no earnest young reader a chance to discover anything unexpected; the magazines and book supplements that accept "cultural comment" only when written in a snappy prose whose function is to startle the reader rather than to inform him; the English departments featuring the triumph of "deconstructionism" over some helpless poem —and this to captive audiences of graduate students whose only chance to get an assistantship at Upper Wyoming State and to mark 300 themes a week is to imitate this fictitious superiority of "creative" critics over the poems they discuss.

Our literary culture is in the same disarray as our politics, or rather our lack of politics and its replacement by mob-mindedness. Factionalism rules the roost; the most desperate ignorance and cruelty have to be heard out with respect; ideologies are as rampant as cancer cures. New wars of religion are upon us, and intolerance rules. This country is going through the profound inner crisis that Marx and Henry Adams foretold: the technology of the future is already here and has outrun our existing social and economic relations. "The history of an epoch," said Einstein, "is the history of its instruments." Frightened of our instruments, yet increasingly dependent on them, we live intellectually from crisis to crisis, hand to mouth. We have no believable goals for our society or for ourselves. If books are more and more produced simply as commodities, just like movies, it is because books even for the minuscule number of Americans that regularly buy them tend to be diet books, self-help books, information manuals, almanacs, thrillers.

Of course film has largely usurped the inevitability of narrative that used to belong to the novel. But as that peculiarly incisive novelist, V. S. Naipaul, says in a wonderful essay on Conrad,

> More and more today, writers' myths are about the writers themselves: the work has become less obtrusive. The great societies that produced the great novels of the past have cracked. . . . The novel as a form no longer carries conviction. Experimentation, not aimed at the real difficulties, has corrupted response. The novelist, like the painter, no longer recognizes his interpretive function; he seeks to go beyond it; and his audience diminishes. And so the world we inhabit, which is always new, goes by unexamined, made ordinary by the camera, un-

TRELAWNY'S DREAM

The dark illumination of a storm
and water-noise, chuckling along the hull
as the craft runs tight before it.
Sometimes Shelley's laughter wakes me here,
unafraid, as he was the day he dove
into water for the first time, a wooded pool
on the Arno, and lay like a conger eel
on the bottom—"where truth lies," he said—
until I hauled him up.

But oftener the dream insists on all,
insists on retelling all.
Ned Williams is the first
to see the peril of the squall. His shout
to lower sail scares the deck-boy wide-eyed
and cuts off Shelley's watery merriment.
The big wind strokes the cat-boat like a kitten.
Riding the slate-grey hillocks, she is dragged
by the jib Ned Williams leaves to keep her head.
The kitten knows the hand is a madman's hand
and the bay a madman's lap,
As she scuds helpless, only the cockney boy
Charles Vivian and I—a dreamer and a child—
see the felucca loom abeam. Her wet lateen
ballooning in the squall, she cuts across
wind and seas in a wild tack, she is on us.
The beaked prow wrenches the little cabin
from the deck, tosses the poet slowly to the air—
he pockets his book, he waves to me and smiles—
then to his opposite element,
light going into darkness, gold into lead.
The felucca veers and passes, a glimpse of a face
sly with horror on her deck. I watch our brave
sailor boy stifle his cry of knowledge
as the boat takes fatal water, then Ned's stricken face,
scanning the waves
for what will never be seen again except in dreams.

All this was a long time ago, I remember.
None of them was drowned except me
whom a commotion of years washes over.
They hail me from the dream, they call an old man
to come aboard, these youths on an azure bay.
The waters may keep the dead, as the earth may,
and fire and air. But dream is my element.
Though I am still a strong swimmer
I can feel this channel widen as I swim.

William Meredith

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meditated on; and there is no one to awaken us to a sense of true wonder.

To be sure, there are many good and even valuable books that sell—even by scholars who seek to define our crises and awkwardly chart the inhuman future. Scholarly university presses can at least overlook some, not all, of the terrors of the marketplace and have written a bright chapter in our book history. More good and bad books are published than ever; there are more real and quack publishers; as there are more readers, more "successful" personalities to celebrate in our popular magazines, more facts on file.

When I think of the influence on American life of our two greatest literary periods—the 1850s and the 1920s—of Emerson, Thoreau, Twain, Dreiser, Mencken, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Edmund Wilson—my complaint is not just that the good books have so little lasting reverberation, but that our many splendid talents don't have the scope in which to exercise influence. They seem to be part of the drift instead of exercising some mastery.

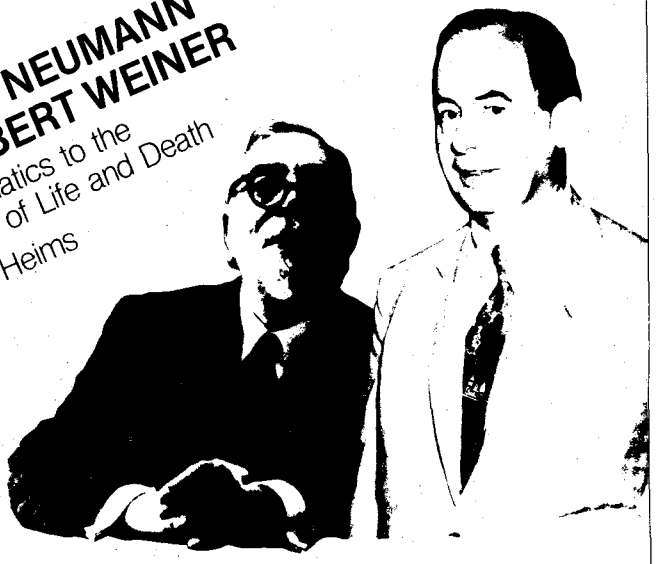
What is ominous about our literary state is that so much is accepted as ad hoc, temporary, spasmodic—and so has to be "sensational" in order to show some effect. American writing, featuring so many "generation crises," leaping off the front pages with personality stars who are such for a month, fiction written from any sexual or ethnic complaint, resembles a parade in the rain. Nothing lasts. I am not so foolhardy as to pretend that I know what lasts—that I can analyze to the depths what has no depth. Scott Fitzgerald, as his friend Edmund Wilson laughed, couldn't spell. Fitzgerald has lasted. He predicted it, for "the stamp that goes into my books so that people can read it blind like Braille." Whatever the stamp is that made *Gatsby* last for all its plotfulness, *An American Tragedy* for all its barbaric epithets, *The Sound and the Fury* for all its obsessive family matter, Frost for all his sententiousness, Stevens for all his contemplative coldness, I am quite sure that most of our leading novelists and poets just now do not have it.

One reason may be the inability to imagine the full impact of the technological storm on our mental life. Tom Wolfe is a very clever journalist, as audience-minded as a strip teaser, and has written his most serious book, about the astronauts, in *The Right Stuff*. I am properly impressed with all his research, his sense of what is new and urgent about the condition of being an astronaut; I recognize the effort of his highly pepped-up prose to convey the danger, the thrill, above all the science, of being an astronaut. Wolfe knows what is going on in the remotest air fields and space stations; his style captures the razzmatazz, the "spritz," as stand-up comics used to call it, the frenetic flow and delirium of a special way of flying, talking, living.

But from the title down, all *The Right Stuff* says about the inner world of astronauts is that they have to show the "right stuff"—to be the super elite that so few can join. Wolfe is satisfied to show how the men—and their wives—respond to this unusual pressure, to show some extra manliness. Even when we grant that this world is entirely new to everyone, especially to the astronauts, the psychology of the book is military. We suspect that human beings in solitude and danger are more complex than this, and above all less chatty. Wolfe is an understandably conceited fellow with this big story and we respond to his assurance. But the only motivations he can explore are those that the astronauts officially know.

The rocket world, like everything excessive and super-mechanical laid on us just now, may be too serious a subject for journalists to dress up as literature. Wolfe can hardly be blamed if he thinks "literature" is old-fashioned. Only a journalist has the drive, the obstinacy, the encouragement from his publisher to do a book like *The Right Stuff*. The most ambitious imaginative work to deal with technology in our lives,

JOHN VON NEUMANN AND NORBERT WEINER
From Mathematics to the Technologies of Life and Death
by Steve J. Heims



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Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*, significantly became just another item in the academic department of "absurdity." Pynchon, unlike most literary fellows, at least majored in science, which may be why, like the cultural historian Jacques Barzun, he looks on science as "the great entertainment." Pynchon may just be a promising candidate for immortality because he is able to infuriate American big shots incapable of thinking an inch beyond their personal importance. The writer's advisory committee to the Pulitzer Prizes, which recommended *Gravity's Rainbow* for the fiction prize in 1974, was overruled rudely by a *Wall Street Journal* editor higher up on the Pulitzer totem pole; no fiction prize was awarded that year. He explained, with some irritation, that he couldn't even read the damned thing.

We are reminded of the glorious days when *Moby Dick* was a proclaimed a book "for bedlam," *Huckleberry Finn* "fit only for the slums," *The Waste Land* "a hoax." After all, John S. Sumner and the Society for the Suppression of Vice managed to make even Dreiser's *The Genius* interesting by suppressing it. Nothing is now suppressible or censorable. Our literary thinking is so much geared to the hourly crisis that vulgarities like Joseph Heller's *Good As Gold* are indulged because *Catch-22* became a byword for our anxious belief that nothing works. All is irrational. The fatalism of the man in the street, that perennial victim, has at last been matched by the cynicism of what are called "top intellectuals." So much alienation from American life is understandable—after all, what is a system for if not to satisfy us without limit? But when our precious alienation becomes abrasive at the expense of every bourgeois but ourselves, it becomes just another piece of American claptrap.

Since the future is plainly here, and we cannot understand all it is doing to us—even that may not be the point that some far-off generation will know about us—it may just be the mysticism of knowledge that so much nescience confronts us with. "It is because so much happens," Joe Christmas's grandmother lamented in *Light in August*. "Too much happens." We are no longer sure just where all this is happening. So a whole dimension of present literature is occupied by nostalgia.

Although there is a marked decline in history courses, in the sense of the past, history has become the sense of crisis, of a civilization in decline, of what one might well call the evaporation of history. Too many zigzag lines on our historical graphs lead on the one hand to instant history, on the other to the idealization of the frontier, the John Wayne syndrome so weepily exploited by Joan Didion in nicely simple books like *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*. Nothing historical exists now for its own sake. Our sense of history is entirely contemporary, as witness Barbara Tuchman's *A Distant Mirror*, which is not about the distant Middle Ages but about the chain of wars that along with technology as a form of aggression rushing out of two terrible wars has so clearly subdued our minds.

The writer's problem is that we are locked into "today"—conceptually, superconsciously. We cannot see beyond the whirlwind of change in which we spin round and round like the lovers in Dante's hell whose greatest pain was to remember past happiness, and so could not blame their temptation. We are waiting on history to carry us to some next stage of consciousness as once people waited on God to accomplish just that. But books are not written by history. You have to be strong in the legs to write, said Henry Thoreau. That was spiritual self-confidence.

Yet there is no country in the world with the buoyancy, the inborn sense of freedom, the explosive amount of universal material that we present to the world as the great modern experiment—and feel in ourselves. It is our very disorder and factionalism, the fact that so many Americans have nothing in common but their living on this continent, even the violence and insecurity endemic in our shifting American lives, that in the past produced writers who were famous—for having nothing in common with each other. American disorder is our strength as well as our dismay. But what we never felt before, never, never! was the sense that nothing is so real to us as ourselves, that there is so little to respect, that we have so few dreams.

All Things to All Men: The False Promise of the Modern American Presidency by Godfrey Hodgson

(Simon and Schuster; $12.95)

I have a friend who advances a novel theory about the meaning of the Carter years. The president's frustrations, he says, are evidence not of the weakness of the office, but rather of its latent strength. Has Carter made a hash of his dealings with Congress? That only shows how much further a man with legislative finesse might have gone. Is his message unclear? That underscores the power available to a gifted orator. Are his assistants poorly chosen and led? That only reminds us of the potential open to someone who would draw from a broader pool of talent. And so on down the bill of particulars against Jimmy Carter.

My friend proposes this theory with an eye toward evicting Carter on November 4, but its real significance is what happens beginning next January 20. A prominent element in today's conventional wisdom holds that Carter's failings arise from his personal peculiarities—he is vacillating, pious, a hick. Similarly, his predecessors' difficulties can be traced to idiosyncracies in each of their characters: Gerald Ford (dumb), Richard Nixon (crook), Lyndon Johnson (megalomaniac), John Kennedy (denied the chance to succeed with Congress in a second term). This argument leads nicely to the conclusion that the presidency will be successful if only we come up with the right man. But, as Godfrey Hodgson says in his new book,

> when five consecutive men—all of them, with the possible exception of Gerald Ford, men of very great political ability—all fail to operate an office, when their task seems to get progressively more and more difficult, then the fault can hardly be in the individuals. It must be in the institution. It is time to see where the causes of the trouble lie.

Hodgson is a British journalist who has brought to American subjects a depth and sophistication that many

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locals lack. His previous book, *America in Our Time*, published in 1976, was a skillful combination of economic, political, and social analysis, backed up and brought to life (as so many "think" books are not) by diligent reporting. This time, his subject is "the causes of the trouble" with the presidency—why so few recent presidents have seemed able to do what they, or we, think they should. With the exception of one portion that strikes me as monumentally wrong-headed, this is a thoughtful, thorough, persuasive exploration of a problem that will only grow in importance as the next president is sworn in.

Hodgson is less interested in the familiar "irony" of presidential power—the man who can launch a thousand missiles cannot get Russell Long to give him the time of day—than in the fact of recent presidents' seeming impotence.

> Whether he is liberal or conservative . . . he is unlikely to be able to achieve his goals or fulfill his promises. The more urgent a social or economic malady, the less reasonable has it become to imagine that the President will be able to reduce it, either with surgery or with medication, within his first term. Yet that is more and more likely to be all the time he will have. . . . If Jimmy Carter should still be President in January, 1985, he will be the first incumbent in 24 years to survive two whole terms.

A substantial part of the problem, in Hodgson's view, is our widely unrealistic expectations about what presidents "should" be able to do. Franklin Roosevelt largely shaped the popular conception of the modern, "activist" presidency, but his record also set standards by which most of his successors were sure to fail. Roosevelt's very skill as a political virtuoso was in the long run damaging, Hodgson says, because it left a record of personal, not institutional, success: "There was always an ad hoc, not to say an ad hominem flavor about the New Deal."

> . . . . By his own highly personal methods, [FDR] succeeded in getting six successive Congresses to pass a very high proportion of the legislation he sent up. But for all that he had done nothing to change the rules of the game. . . . He had greatly heightened expectations—both in Congress and in the nation—of what his successors would be able to accomplish. Yet after all he had done nothing, except by his example, to help most of them meet those expectations.

Expectations were further heightened by the scholars of the presidency who chewed over the Roosevelt record, compared it to the genial passivity of the Eisenhower years, and proclaimed in the late 1950s that the nation's hopes for greatness lay with ambitious, activist presidents. As one of many telling indications of the mood of that period, Hodgson offers this passage from Clinton Rossiter in 1956:

> The President is not a Gulliver immobilized by ten thousand tiny cords, nor even a Prometheus chained to a rock of frustration. He is rather a kind of magnificent lion, who can roam widely and do great deeds, so long as he does not try to break loose from his broad reservation.

Hodgson then describes the changes that have left the modern president naked and isolated, bereft of the steady alliances with Congress, party, public, and permanent bureaucracy he would need to meet even modest expectations, let alone the grandiose ones he has inherited. Most of the symptoms he describes are familiar, but they have a surprising cumulative impact, largely because of the skill with which Hodgson synthesizes them. In the Congress, the president confronts an institution in which "reform" has destroyed party discipline and bureaucratic growth has proceeded at a pathologic rate. Before World War I, Hodgson says, there were fewer Senate employees than senators. Now there are more than 11,000 staff members working for legislators and their committees, and some 30,000 in the whole congressional establishment (which includes the General Accounting Office, the Library of Congress, etc.). Swelling in bulk and decreasing in cohesion, Congress now "has ample power to impede presidential leadership; it has no power whatsoever to supply leadership in his place."

Modern presidents have accelerated the decline of the parties by running against, or in spite of, the official party structure; but they find, once in office, that they have thereby lost another crucial tool. Hodgson points out that during his moment of agony in the summer of 1979, when Jimmy Carter summoned every political seer under the sun to join him at Camp David, he did not invite the chairman of his party, nor the national committeemen, nor even the full Democratic leadership from the Congress. "It would have been astonishing if he had done so. . . . To all intents and purposes, as a resource for presidential leadership, party no longer exists."

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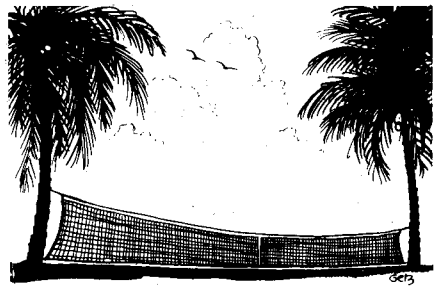

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As for the press, Hodgson demonstrates that the president has come to dominate the news, but not really to control it. Like Jackie Onassis, he gets more and more ink without really being happy about it. Overexposed, he eventually becomes boring and passé; almost from the moment the president takes office, reporters are looking forward to the thrill of the next election-year chase.

Only in discussing the president's inability to control the permanent bureaucracy does Hodgson's argument seem cockeyed. He observes, correctly, that American Cabinet members, being creatures of their president, do not bring to his administration the independent standing and the token of party unity that their counterparts in Britain do. He points out the way that Cabinet departments are pulled into orbits different from the president's, and he rightly insists that there is now no reliable way for those at the top of the government to get a realistic sense of what their programs look like at the bottom, on the delivery end. Then he goes off the track with the conclusion that the president has too much political control over the bureaucracy, and that political appointees are a major menace. When John Kennedy came to office,

> the people he appointed to key executive jobs were not necessarily the best available career professionals. They were appointed because they had helped him in the campaign, or because they had been recommended to him in a national 'talent search' conducted by three of his aides, or because for some other reason he thought he could count on them to be 'his men' in a particular department or agency.

Politics intruding into government! The "best available career professionals" being overlooked! It's all quite a shock. The lesson of unwieldy, intractable government seems just the opposite: that there is too little influence of "politics" upon government, too much embarrassment about rewarding those who have helped their candidate succeed. Elections are the vehicle through which democracy is supposed to be "responsive." Why should a president chosen in that fashion feel shy about appointing those who share his views? This does not mean that every advance man should be secretary of state, but rather that political allies should not always be referred to as "cronies" or their appointments described as "packing" an agency. Hodgson's argument is subtler than the pure goo-gooism that looks down on all who dirty their hands in politics. (He insists, for example, on the difference between party loyalists, whom he admires, and those who are loyal to one individual, whom he does not.) I must also allow the possibility that I am irritated by this section because Hodgson (mis-)uses one of my comments about President Carter as a straw man to make his point. Still, Hodgson sounds much wiser when saying,

> Americans have always been suspicious of party politics and inclined to be contemptuous of party politicians. . . . Historically, moral fastidiousness about party politics has often been mixed up with class disdain about party politicians

than when speaking with disdain and suspicion of the likes of Hamilton Jordan.

Hodgson's prescription is less convincing than his diagnosis. He suggests that we lower our expectations of our presidents, strengthen the parties, rebuild the alliances between the president and groups whose support he needs. "Forty years ago, the Brownlow committee wrote that the President needs help," Hodgson concludes. "It would be truer to say today that he needs friends: institutional friends and partners in the operation of a system where too often today he has only rivals and competitors." That is a statement of a destination, if not quite a road map; for putting it so clearly, Hodgson deserves to be congratulated—and read.

James Fallows

James Fallows is Washington editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*.

Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century by John Boswell

(University of Chicago Press; $27.50)

It is John Boswell's claim in this remarkable new book that the history of Christianity's attitude toward gay people is not the unrelenting tale of hostility and repression we long have been led to believe. To the contrary,

> most of the attitudes of fanaticism and intolerance which are today thought of as characteristically 'medieval' were in fact common only to the later [12th-13th centuries] Middle Ages. The early Middle Ages, with a few exceptions, had accommodated a great many beliefs and lifestyles with relative ease.

In fact, until roughly 1150 AD, Catholic Europe regarded same-gender love and lust with astonishing equanimity. There were gay marriages and gay saints. Several openly gay men were consecrated as bishops. Much of the popular literature of the day (often written by highly regarded clerics) "dealt positively with gay love." A thriving gay subculture reached its apogee between the years 1050 and 1150; it had a rich body of literature, its own argot and conventions, its demimonde of street prostitutes and brothels catering to a large clientele from all classes and of varied tastes.

Then, during the 200-year period spanning the mid-12th to mid-14th centuries, homosexuality and attitudes toward it underwent a sea change—from "the personal preference of a prosperous minority, satirized and celebrated in popular verse, to a dangerous, antisocial, and severely sinful aberration." What had been morally and legally acceptable in 1100 was by 1300 regarded as an activity subject to the death penalty—often for a single proven act. Why this dramatic transformation in public opinion? We don't know. Boswell offers some tentative explanations: the rise of corporate states with the power and will to regulate the personal aspects of human life, the xenophobia and pressure to conform resulting from the Crusades, as the "sodomitical" Moslems from without and "heretics" from within came to seem an even greater threat. Boswell is too sophisticated to accept such vague "causes" as sufficient to

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explain the shift in attitude toward homosexuality from tolerance to hostility. He candidly declares: "it is not possible to analyze the causes of this change satisfactorily"; not yet, not in this rudimentary stage in our revisionist understanding of the medieval period.

Yet there is much, even now, that Boswell feels can be stated with confidence about the general subject of homosexuality in medieval Europe. He is entitled to his confidence, for although he is still in his early 30s and an untenured professor (at Yale), his labors have been prodigious and his erudition awesome. For 10 years he has analyzed records in a dozen languages, consulted all sources in their original (in the process providing some startling new translations of familiar Greek and Latin texts), and unearthed unknown or obscure materials ranging from Icelandic proverbs to Persian epics to Jewish erotic verse to Hispano-Arabic literature. Most of what he has concluded sounds as startling as it does persuasive.

He finds nothing at all in the writings that eventually became the Christian Bible "which would have categorically precluded homosexual relations among early Christians." Despite misleading translations which have long been thought to imply the contrary, Boswell has discovered "no extant text or manuscript (whether in Hebrew, Greek, Syriac or Armaic)" that even contains the word "homosexual" (nor any other word that might correspond to current English usage). Relentlessly tracking down the original context and meaning of those passages in the Bible (the account of Sodom in Genesis 19, for example) later used to condemn same-gender attraction, Boswell (and a few lexicographers before him—he is not *sui generis*) has found that the crucial word or text in question referred instead to such varied matters as temple prostitution, ritual uncleanliness, and masturbation. "At the very most, the effect of Christian Scripture on attitudes toward homosexuality could be described as moot."

Thus when the modern Catholic church speaks as if its doctrines can be traced back in an unbroken line to the patristic fathers and Jesus and the Apostles, it can do so only at the expense of a fundamental misreading of historical facts—at the expense, too, of brushing aside a significant portion of its own heritage: those prominent early theologians (Ausonius, Saint John Samascene, Marbod of Rennes, Saint Aelred of Rievaulx, et al.) who expressed positive attitudes toward same-sex eroticism. This, Boswell laconically suggests, may prove "discomforting" to contemporary Christian polemicists against homosexuality. I doubt it, since they have shown no notable embarrassment over the long-known fact that a number of the fathers of the church severely censured such practices as lending money at interest, having sexual intercourse during the menstrual period, shaving, bathing regularly, or wearing jewelry and dyed fabrics. None of these (unlike homosexuality) have become matters of controversy within the Christian community today.

The polemicists prefer to cite Saint Thomas Aquinas's writing, considered both now and in his own day (the 13th century) the apogee and definitive synthesis of Catholic moral theology. They will have more trouble henceforth in doing so, for in a brilliant critique of Saint Thomas, Boswell lays bare not only the internal contradictions of his teachings throughout, but in particular the near hilarious twists and turns he took in order to distinguish "natural" from "unnatural" pleasures. Aquinas emerges from under Boswell's scalpel not as a powerful, ordinal thinker but as a harassed journeyman attempting to accommodate the pressures generated by the shift in popular attitudes toward homosexuality. His writings are best seen not as an accurate, stately summation of the true complexity of preceding Christian tradition, but as a profoundly partial, evasive curtailing of it. A far more truthful summation, Boswell insists, would recognize that moral theology through the 12th century treated homosexuality "as at worst comparable to heterosexual fornication but more often remained silent on the issue."

To characterize this analysis as revolutionary—in its implications for historical studies, for Christianity, for the current debate over sexual mores—is to state the obvious. Boswell's study is indubitably one of the most profound, explosive works of scholarship to appear within recent memory. His book will inaugurate controversies bound to rage for years. As even my partial, cursory summary of its contents makes clear, the issues at stake are large—and the ensuing clamor is bound to match them in magnitude. Points of fact and interpretation will be challenged, debated, disproved, upheld. Experts from dozens of fields will want to put in their oars. But Boswell's erudition is so arcane and his synthesis so encompassing that few, if any, scholars will be able to command the needed range of expertise for an authoritative evaluation. If any such do exist, I am surely not among them. Some graduate school training aside, I am not a specialist in medieval studies. I am no more than an "interested party" (gay, that is, not Christian)—doubtless a disqualification in some eyes.

My drawbacks duly noted, I nonetheless want to venture some tentative observations, caveats, doubts.

On a first reading, I found the book overwhelming, on a second merely stunning. That minor declension in enthusiasm is the result of noticing on closer look some occasional vagaries in argument or definition, some possible inconsistencies and overstatements. I had the most trouble with the material in Part I ("Points of Departure") of the book, approximately one-fourth of the whole. In that section Boswell provides an overview. He discusses the problems of historical evidence (and of correcting the errors and falsifications of previous historians), sets forth his themes, provides extensive background discussion of the Greco-Roman precursors of the Christian era, and comments on the variety of contemporary issues embedded in the historical material (the etiology of homosexuality, "boy/man" love, "promiscuity," etc.). I found most of the discussion remarkably careful, comprehensive—and persuasive. But not all of it. An occasional remark or emphasis suggests that Boswell may be more familiar with historical materials than contemporary ones, and that in certain limited areas (and in terms of subtle

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overtones only) may harbor a rather conservative set of biases.

For example, I think he is simply wrong in asserting "there does not seem to be any evidence that gay people really are more or less sexual than others"; not only could a long bibliography be cited to the contrary, but many gay people (more males than females) now view their heightened sexuality as cause for self-congratulation, not apologetics —they affirm the value of a sex-positive attitude in a sex-negative society. Similarly, I'd question Boswell's view that "much" of the speculation during the 1970s "on the evolutionary significance of homosexuality" has ended in agreement "on the essential likelihood of genetic viability for homosexual feelings through one selection mechanism or another." I'd argue there's been little agreement; Boswell's citation of E. O. Wilson's much controverted *Sociobiology* in support of his opinion will hardly persuade the many research specialists (Masters and Johnson, for example) who find the recent attempt to link genetics and sexual orientation wholly unproven, to say nothing of "politically" suspect.

I'll leave chief responsibility for evaluating Boswell's central avowal that "much of the present volume is specifically intended to rebut the common idea that religious belief—Christian or not—has been the *cause* of intolerance in regard to gay people," to those gay Christians who have insisted on the compatibility of their sexual orientation and their devotion to institutional religion and who have been working through such organizations as DIGNITY (gay Catholics) and INTEGRITY (gay Episcopalians) to "maintain a dialogue with the Mother Church." Instead I'll content myself with one or two quick cheap shots—and then run.

It is one thing (a monumental thing) to demonstrate that the history of Christianity is not one of monolithic opposition to homosexuality. But it is quite another to expect that today's clerical leaders will welcome and embrace the news, ceasing those punitive campaigns against gay people which in 1980, if not in 1180, are demonstrably the major source for the maintenance and spread of homophobia and intolerance. In reading Boswell, I now and then got the unnerving feeling that at the top of his own set of priorities is the wish to hold gay Christians to their religious allegiance—that he is more eager to defend the viability of church affiliation for gays than to bolster an emerging gay subculture whose left wing is decidedly—in my view, rightly—anticlerical. I don't know how else to account for Boswell's curious statement that "It is unlikely that at any other time in Western history have gay people been the victims of more widespread and vehement intolerance than during the first half of the twentieth century." He may be correct in claiming that "the excesses of the Inquisition are often exaggerated," but after all, the death penalty for homosexuality (a rather extreme form of intolerance) had become legal prescription in most of Europe by 1300 AD.

Even if I am only marginally right in thinking Boswell's personal values have in some instances colored his interpretations, I should add that the same can be said of any historian who has ever written—it's a garden variety occupational hazard. More surprising, given Boswell's fierce clarity, are those moments in the book when his terminology turns muddy or his emphasis overcolored.

No one, to be sure, can confidently draw the fine lines needed to determine whether a given set of feelings is best described as affectionate, companionate, or sexual. Boswell himself is fully cognizant of the difficulties. He warns us early in the text that the words the ancient Greeks used to express or describe feelings do not neatly divide into our latter-day categories, but instead ambiguously overlap. He rightly cautions that "one cannot expect and should not demand from historical sources 'proof' of emotional states."

Yet despite his own excellent advice, Boswell now and then makes some overly authoritative pronouncements —statements that seem to go beyond what the fragmentary nature of the evidence warrants; he over-rationalizes, if you like, the evanescent. When discussing, for example, Saint Anselm's "extraordinary emotional relationships" with a succession of his male students, Boswell quotes at length from a letter which he characterizes as "erotic by any standards." Not by mine: I read it as sentimental effusion.

Sometimes it is a seeming contradiction in interpretation rather than a muddled definition that leaves us puzzled. At one point, for example, Boswell carefully notes that the exclusivity suggested by the modern terms "homosexual" and "heterosexual" is extremely rare in the literature—and reality—of the ancient world. Yet at another point he tells us that "permanent and exclusive homosexual relationships" regularly appeared in Roman novels addressed to a general public "without any suggestion of oddity."

At other times, Boswell can—with a dazzling display of erudition and fine-tuned exposition—reopen a debate that has long seemed closed. But then he'll suddenly overreach himself, generalize in a more dogmatic manner than the evidence warrants, leading us to recoil in uncertainty when we had been on the verge of agreement. The best example of this is in his handling of the issue of the age of male lovers in ancient Greece. The matter has long seemed settled: the common view has been that in the classical world gay relationships always involved persons of different ages: older man or woman as lover and guide, young boy or girl as beloved and tutee. But Boswell presents considerable evidence to the contrary. Euripides and Agathon were lovers when Euripides was 72 and Agathon 40; Parmenides and Zenon when the former was 65 and the latter 40. Whereas K. J. Dover, in his recent *Greek Homosexuality*, reports that the idea of continuing an erotic relationship after a youth's beard had begun to grow would have been thought "shocking," Boswell points out that Alcibiades was already full bearded when Socrates fell in love with him, that most Greeks had no doubt that Achilles and Patroclus were sexual lovers, and that in Rome "it seems quite possible" that the distinction between "lover and beloved" was "purely a semantic nicety."

By reopening the debate on the "age" question, Boswell has inevitably reopened a number of other issues related to it: whether same-gender relationships were characteristically carnal or "spiritual," of brief or sustained duration, confined to the aristocracy alone or spread throughout all classes. Boswell (supported here by Dover for the classical period) emphatically affirms the carnal and trans-class nature of gay life and (contra Dover) discerns any

Note:

Robert Pinsky's *An Explanation of America* won the first annual Saxifrage Prize.

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number of long-term relationships. And he argues his points persuasively. All this is accomplishment enough, especially when one realizes how heavily weighted on the other side of these issues the scholarly literature has been.

But now and then Boswell overreaches. Not satisfied with challenging (often capsizing) earlier "expert" opinions, he goes on to make some generalizations that seem to me too broad and confident for what the available documentation can support. He claims, for example, that it is "manifestly" true that to the Greeks any beautiful man was referred to as a "boy"; surely "manifestly" is too bold a word for describing what remains a murky subject. Similarly, Boswell's statement that it is "unlikely" that "the apparent prevalence of erotic relationships between adults and boys in the past corresponded to reality," though more tentative in tone, still strikes me as not modulated enough to take into account the lacunae in our knowledge. Such evidence as we do have suggests that no one pattern was prevalent.

Even if I am right in feeling he occasionally falls prey to vagueness or overstatement, that is no great source for wonder. What is a source for wonder is how firmly he holds his footing in general. The bulk of his text is characterized by a keen awareness of the ambiguities of evidence and superb control over delicate points of disputation. Care and conscientiousness are the book's hallmarks. If I've dwelt on some few exceptions, it's because of my conviction that Boswell's study is a major achievement likely to have immense scholarly and political influence—and as such deserves and requires the closest possible scrutiny. No doubt, many others better equipped than I in specialized areas of knowledge will carry forward the scrutiny.

Even now it is safe to say that *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality* is that rare item—a truly ground-breaking study. With an abundance of skill and daring, John Boswell has opened up a vast historical terrain for reassessment, some of it never before explored, much of it marked for far too long by barricaded, sealed borders.

Martin Bauml Duberman

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Woody Guthrie: A Life by Joe Klein

(Knopf; $15.95)

When Woody Guthrie surfaced in the late 1930s from a decade of hoboing and hard traveling, American radicals could hardly believe their luck. Here was "Shakespeare in overalls," a guy who had walked right out of the Oklahoma Hills to fulfill their dream of a proletarian poet who could renew the integrity of democratic America which somehow had been lost in the boom and bust of the 20th century.

Guthrie was the Johnny Appleseed of song—a raggedy Okie who had traveled the backroads of America absorbing its sights and sounds and broadcasting his humane message to anyone who would listen. Many of the songs he carried in his satchel would become part of America's cultural history. There was anger in them, and the pulse of the people whose life and suffering Tin Pan Alley never reported. While Hollywood and Broadway mythologized the Forgotten Men (*42nd Street, Americana*), Guthrie walked among them in boxcars, hobo camps, skid row. He was a musical pilgrim, a disheveled saint of the road.

"All you can write is what you see," Guthrie said. And he'd seen a lot. He'd seen his father, Charley Guthrie, a man with a gift for gab and an eye for profit, go from flamboyant real-estate success and local celebrity to skid row. He'd seen his little sister burned to death. He'd watched his mother slowly go crazy, afflicted by Huntington's chorea (a disease he would inherit, which attacks the frontal lobe of the brain) and from the boredom of small-town Oklahoma life. In her depressions, Nora Guthrie would become violent—throwing things at her kids, attacking them with knives, even trying to set fire to Charley while he was asleep. By the time Guthrie was 16, with his mother in an asylum and his father on his downward spiral to the gutter, his abandonment was complete. And it left its mark. He became an "alley rat" and scavenger. Guthrie wrote later:

> I seen what papa's . . . land trading was doing every day to Mama . . . swappings, tradings, cheating of the worst and lowest kind. . . . It's been stuff like this, by the day, by the hour, by the ten or fifteen years that wrecked the family. Mama cried with her head down a hundred spells a day, while all of us had our eye on the money—the dough, the long green, the coin, the deeds to that land, the title to that property.

All Guthrie's choices in his young adulthood were in rebellion against that memory, a fact which Joe Klein's exhaustive biography never explores, although he dredges up copious material. Guthrie's refusal to get on, to make money or keep it, to accept everything while becoming nothing was a rejection of the blinkered material ambition of his father that had brought so much sorrow to the family. Always a performer (the class clown and local showoff), Guthrie invented a romantic role to protect himself from hurt. "I never remember being in any earthly predicament that my imagination could not find ways to enjoy," he wrote later, stymied by the Army. Restless, hard-drinking, full of curiosity and fun, Guthrie was always puckish, the eternal Peter Pan. "I will never grow up," he confessed years later to his daughter. Adulthood meant work, suffering, and death, so he kept to the open road, never adopting the responsibilities or the timetable of grown-ups. ("I want to see the grown-ups be kids," he said on his album of children's songs.) Guthrie denied the world that had denied him. Finally, when the idea of a troubador ravished his romantic imagination in the early 1930s, as the Oklahoma oil boom gave way to the Dust Bowl, Guthrie's restlessness, his sense of impermanence and human suffering could be transformed into something heroic. He would salvage the past of the people, and honor their struggle in song. It was a redemption of sorts, and also a neat rationalization of his own hurt and anger. "I am never surprised or disappointed," Guthrie wrote, giving a potted biography to Los Angeles audiences in his first venture into radio (1938). "For I have no regret or future

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ambition. . . ." No sooner was Guthrie in front of a microphone than he was building his legend.

He was fecund, and songs poured out of him. It was as if he were naming a lost world for the first time. In "This Land Is Your Land" he gave a geography lesson in verse; in "Roll On, Columbia" he listed all the river's tributaries; in "The Grand Coulee Dam" place names and types of factories cram each line. Giving advice to the Almanac Singers, a left-wing group with whom he wrote and performed for a few years, about how to reach the workers, he insisted that the songs must include "wheels, whistles, steam, boilers, shafts, cranks, operators, tuggers, pulleys, engines and all of the well-known gadgets that make up a factory." Guthrie railed against "This damn Hollywood stuff . . . it don't talk worker's language. Our songs are right out of the workers' lives." For Guthrie, it soon became us and them, left-wingers with songs about real life and "rich folks' music." America, Guthrie felt, wasn't built in "a sissy tone of voice as the nickel machines are full of. . . ."

He had a point. When Rodgers and Hammerstein sang about Oklahoma they turned it into a rollicking never-never land where the diction was as far-fetched as their sense of place: "We know we belong to the land/And the land we belong to is grand." When Guthrie sang about Oklahoma in his thin voice, both the twang and the troubles had the ring of truth. In "Talking Dust Bowl," he brought together all the humor and anger of observed life:

> Rain quit and the wind got high
> And a black old dust storm filled the sky
> and I swapped my farm for a Ford machine
> And I poured it full of this gasoline
> And I started. Rockin and a-rollin. Over the mountains
> Out toward the old peach bowl.

"A folk song," Guthrie wrote,

> Is what's wrong and how to fix it, or it could be whose hungry and where their mouth is, or whose out of work and where the job is or whose broke and where the money is or whose carrrying a gun and where the peace is—that's folk lore and folks made it up because they seen that the politicians couldn't find nothing to fix or nobody to feed or give a job of work to. . . . I can sing all day and all night sixty days and sixty nights but of course I ain't got enough wind to be in office.

While most of his lyricist peers were sunning themselves beside a Hollywood pool in the late 1930s and early 1940s, Guthrie was making chump change singing for migrant workers, in union halls, at communist rallies and various fundraising parties. His homespun patter and the sense of purpose in his songs were infectious. "Left-wing, chicken wing, it's all the same to me," he'd say. He had no "career" in a conventional sense and teased the public with his militancy. "I ain't a communist necessarily, but I been in the red all my life." When, in the early 1940s, he teamed up in New York with the Almanac Singers

Woody Guthrie

(who included Pete Seeger and Millard Lampell), the idea of the song as weapon became even stronger. They were fighting fascism, the big bosses, racism. These were important battles, and Guthrie gave the fighters many memorable songs of their experience. He wrote "I'm Stickin' to the Union" and Joe Klein's biography nicely evokes the effects of such songs on men who desperately needed their fighting spirit reinforced.

Guthrie (and Klein) held the naive idea that only left-wing songs are political. "Why had you ought to sing like your satisfied and junk like you hear . . . over the radio," Guthrie said. He wrote "God Blessed America" (later retitled "This Land Is Your Land") as an antidote to Irving Berlin's soppy pop tune. "I'm out to sing songs that will prove to you that this is your land . . . that make you take pride in yourself and your work," Guthrie said. He was also out to disenchant the public, to provide it with an alternative history. Every song, as Plato said, is political. Plato called song "spells for souls directed in all earnest to the production of concord" (*Laws*). Song has been instrumental in propagandizing America and shaping its dream, telling the society that "if you don't have a dream how you gonna make your dream come true," that "something's coming, something good, if you can wait." Guthrie wanted change; Tin Pan Alley and Broadway wanted the status quo. The battle was, and remains, between songs that disenchant and those that enchant; between a public that wants confrontation and one that wants escape. It is not surprising to learn that on hearing the Weavers' "Songs for John Doe," FDR wondered if somehow the singers could be arrested; or that, in the "folk" revival of the 1950s, when many Guthrie songs became standards, they were bowdlerized of their anger and political commitment for mass consumption.

"The world has already built me a legend," Guthrie wrote in 1950. He'd ballyhooed himself in song as "a lonesome traveler, the great historical bum." *Bound for Glory* (1943), his autobiography, helped the legend along. Describing himself to his second wife and mother of three of his six kids, Marjorie Mazia, Guthrie wrote: "He had a national reputation as a people's artist which he had built on pure blind instinct, passion, wild, unbounded, unhampered and unlimited imagination—that sort of inspiration that gets you just so far and no farther." At 30, Guthrie was sublime, at 35 he was derailed, and by 40 he was pathetic. After the war, the labor movement became conservative and prosperity ruled. Guthrie was stalled. He still thought "The workers are anxious for my words." If so, nobody else was.

Guthrie's life became a succession of benders, one-night stands, bouts of traveling, and attempts at writing. He lived in Coney Island, suffering under the weight of his penury and the deterioration of his brain which began to change his speech, his movement, and make him the victim of increasingly erratic behavior. He was frequently drunk; he was jailed for writing obscene letters; he attacked his wife with a kitchen knife and shoved sand into his boy's mouth to stop him from crying. Even as a young man he was an awful father, and, despite Guthrie's professed deep love of his children, Klein cannot make him seem much better in adulthood. There was nothing lyric or poetic about him. He was a mess.

Klein's biography is filled with incidental information about Oklahoma homesteaders, about left-wing New York in the 1930s and 1940s, about folk music and the folk scene but, like Guth-

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rie's life, it is sloppy and unshaped. Klein, a biographer of the mind-reading Maybe school ("Maybe Woody wasn't thinking anything at all"), is not sufficiently adroit to exploit the awful symmetry he sees in Guthrie's life and give his honorable work a strong dramatic structure. He misses a chance to make a readable book into a good one. Guthrie's own daughter would die in a fire as had his sister; and Guthrie himself would be burned so badly on his arm in 1953 that he could no longer play the guitar. Guthrie would descend first into drunkenness like his father and finally into violence and madness like his mother. It is a sad story, and Klein's recounting of his long, slow, agonizing death (hospitalized in 1954, died in 1967) is especially powerful.

As his language started to warp and take on a singsong life of its own in the streams of letters and notes he wrote, his words did not lose their moments of poetic poignance. He ended one letter: "Lovey Me. Writey Me. Savey Me. Lordey God, Woody." In the end, Woody Guthrie, the rambling man, the man of action, would be afflicted by a disease that kept his body in perpetual motion. It wasn't the last irony. His spirit and the image of the lonesome traveler would fuel the folk revival. Bob Dylan (wearing Woody's suit at his first New York gig) would canonize the Guthrie name. Having fought the bourgeoisie all his life, Guthrie would be the bulwark of the new "hipoisie."

John Lahr

John Lahr's most recent book is *Prick Up Your Ears: The Biography of Joe Orton.* (Knopf).

The Letters of Evelyn Waugh edited by Mark Amory

(Ticknor & Fields; $25)

"When I come home in the evenings," Evelyn Waugh wrote in the diary he kept at Oxford, "I hide pennies—and last night because I was drunk, sixpence—all the way along and next day see how many are left. It is so cheap and charitable and amusing." Waugh scattered various riches throughout his 20-odd books and 62 years. The reader of *The Letters of Evelyn Waugh*, edited by Mark Amory, can follow directly behind Waugh in search of assorted small treasures.

Amory has knowledgeably performed an arduous task. Although his footnotes display (at least to an American reader) an excessive interest in the genealogy of tertiary figures, he has managed to pack into them much helpful and colorful detail. Unfortunately he has been too generous in his selections. Waugh himself was a ruthless pruner, who found even many books he greatly admired much too long, and it seems probable that he would have desired a less deferential editor.

The Evelyn Waugh who emerges here is far more humane and interesting than the man who was presented a few years ago with the publication of his diaries. With age Waugh suffered increasingly from oppressive boredom, about which he could be quite amusing, as in the self-portrait from *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold:*

> There was a phrase in the thirties: 'It is later than you think,' which was designed to cause uneasiness. It was never later than Mr. Pinfold thought. At intervals during the day and night he would look at his watch and learn always with disappointment how little of his life was past, how much there was still ahead of him.

Waugh indulged his boredom in his diaries, with predictable results; in his letters, spurred by an audience, he sometimes produced prose as lively as that in his novels.

I suspect—and this would be a large misfortune—that a number of Waugh's books will not weather well. In his willingness to accept the prejudices of his friends, in his nostalgia for the past and lack of curiosity toward the future, and in his restricted range of intellectual and political interests, Waugh fits the definition of a provincial writer. It is odd that this should be true, for no other major English novelist was better traveled than Waugh, who over the years visited and wrote extensively about five continents. Waugh's narrowness derived not from necessity or education but from choice and temperament. His misanthropy shaped him here. Waugh had little use for "proletarians" or Americans or "frogs" or the young, and took few pains to make his books accessible to them. When Waugh writes to the poet John Betjeman that "It is you & six or seven others whom I seek to please in writing" this statement seems less a generous compliment than, sadly, an accurate observation.

That Waugh could surmount his shortcomings to become such a masterful and irreplaceable novelist was due in large part to his comic powers; like Lewis Carroll, whom he admired, he had a genius for inverting things twice, so that they seemed at once doubly skewed and almost normal. Another artistic strength, less prominent but no less valuable, was his store of moral conviction. For all his excesses, Waugh was a deeply, sometimes stiffly, ethical man who inhabited, as this diary jotting shows, a world imbued everywhere with morality: "A profoundly immoral principle: 'It will all be the same in 100 years time.' All morality depends on causality to the nth degree. Every act of free will, good or bad, attenuates its consequences to the end of time."

photo of Evelyn Waugh by Mark Gerson, Camera Press

What these letters illustrate, better than any other of Waugh's books, is how subtly linked both his weaknesses and strengths as a writer were to his own personal Catholicism. Waugh converted from Anglicanism in 1930, at the age of 26. Nothing else in his life—his travels, his increasingly international literary success, his happy second marriage—offered him gratification equal

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to what the church provided. He became an energetic proselytizer, exuberant at the conversion of any of his friends and despondent, almost broken-hearted, at their apostasy. In his own mind, believing "the weakest Catholic nearer the angels and saints than the most earnest outsider," there was little room for ecumenism. Because the church offered Waugh an amplitude beyond his needs, he had little use for, and indeed was suspicious of, broadness in outlook or in literary tastes. "There are many people about who claim to love Picasso and Shakespeare and Dante and Mallarmé all at once and equally. I am afraid catholicism is the enemy of Catholicism."

It is this evangelism that gives *Brideshead Revisited*, the most unfairly denigrated of his novels, its submerged power. *Brideshead* was, as these letters make clear, the book in which Waugh invested the most of himself: in some ways, it was the book of his life. As the story weaves his favorite themes—naiveté and duplicity, nostalgia and exile—it continually works toward the reader's religious conversion, and in the urgency of this task Waugh is even willing to risk the aesthetic indelicacy of preachiness. Waugh later publicly disclaimed *Brideshead*, perhaps in part responding to some negative reviews and to its popular success ("I was pleased with it at the time but I have been badly shaken by its popularity in the U.S."), but perhaps chiefly recoiling from its vulnerable candor: he had written a book that said, at bottom, "save your soul."

Not all of these letters deal with spiritual topics. There are some bawdy notes, more naughty than erotic, to women friends; some sniping bits of literary gossip (favorite targets were Peter Quennell, Cyril Connolly, and the Sitwells); and some letters to newspapers, models of grace and compression. Perhaps most fascinating is the range of letters—humorous, bullying, affectingly tender—to Laura Herbert, the woman who became his second wife. There are as well a few of those macabre touches that so often gave his novels their invigorating chill, as in this account to Nancy Mitford of a drunken trip to London: "On the last evening I dimly remember a dinner party of cosmopolitan ladies where I think I must have been conspicuous. Were you there? I awoke with blood on my hands but found to my intense relief that it was my own."

Brad Leithauser

Brad Leithauser lives and works in Kyoto, Japan.

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Brief Reviews

A Difference in the Family: Life with a Disabled Child by Helen Featherstone

(Basic Books; $13.95)

During the first year of Jody's life his parents learned that he was blind, hydrocephalic, retarded, and suffered from cerebral palsy and seizures. As Helen Featherstone sought help for her son and coped with the family crises brought on by his disability, she began to investigate the field of special education. She read studies, talked with other families, as well as with physicians, therapists, and teachers, about the problems associated with a severe handicap, and she taught classes on the subject at Harvard. She was moved to write about the dignity and resilience of families she read about and met, and about her experience raising Jody.

A Difference in the Family is admirable both as a work of scholarship and as a frank chronicle of the grief, rage, and guilt everyone in a family suffers, and the adjustments each makes, to accommodate the disabled child. Featherstone wrote this book to reassure families like her own that the birth of such a child—which entails fundamental psychological changes as well as bleak visions for the child's future and drastic restrictions on family and social activities—usually does not signify a life of bitter unhappiness.

Featherstone writes unflinchingly about the demoralizing aspects of caring for the handicapped child. The composite picture of her own and other parents' moments of panic and despair is as fascinating for what it reveals about these individuals and their evolving self-awareness as for what it says about the reality of life with the child. In an article cited from the *Exceptional Parent*, a woman writes of her exasperation when her son acted "retarded," of the boredom elicited by his repetitious conversation, of sometimes wishing he would die: "'My feelings on these occasions approach pure hatred.'" The father of an autistic boy speaks to another parent about the dim prospects for his child's adulthood: "'Most of us, for all our hopes and dreams, are still fattening up our children for the institutional kill.'"

Everyone with whom the disabled child comes into contact, says Featherstone, is vulnerable to ambivalent emotions. Siblings struggle with acute feelings of embarrassment about the child's glaring differences, of jealousy at the attention parents pay the child, of guilt about their anger, and of isolation from their peers. Aware of the frustration generated by the oblique diagnoses and clinical abstractions offered by most physicians, Featherstone explains why doctors so often fail when faced with the massive challenges presented by the handicap and by parents' strenuous appeals for reassurance.

Because Featherstone balances the poignancy of her experiences with her extensive professional knowledge of special education, her book avoids both inspirational platitudes and vacuous social science jargon. Repetitive segments and some needlessly labored chapter introductions and conclusions should have been trimmed, but on the whole her observations are exceptionally level-headed and substantial. *A Difference in the Family* evokes a love for these children—despite the anguish they bring—which, in its fierceness and complexity, transforms everyone who is close to them.

Dorothy Wickenden

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Financial Invasion of the U.S.A.: A Threat to American Society? by Earl H. Fry

(McGraw-Hill; $9.95)

All over America, homes, farms, office buildings, and entire companies are being bought up by cash-flush investors from other countries—Japan, Germany, Canada, the Netherlands, and most ubiquitously of all, the Middle East. The prospect of America becoming the refuge for this high-priced "Freedom Flotilla" has spawned a nationwide debate about how much foreign investment is compatible with our national interests.

Much of this debate is unabashedly xenophobic. Stampeded by undocumented fears of losing the family farm, Congress is planning to end a long-established tax exemption that encouraged foreigners to invest in this country. And just recently, the Oklahoma attorney general ruled that foreigners may not own any Oklahoma real estate, farmland or otherwise, promoting his crusade by warning that "Idi Amin could be your next-door neighbor."

This is clearly paranoia, and it is Professor Fry's mission to refute its adherents. Despite its somewhat alarmist title, *Financial Invasion of the U.S.A.* is a nonpolemical presentation of statistics and case histories documenting the long and largely benign tradition of foreign investment in America. This well-written book also explains the various factors that have stimulated the flood of foreign acquisitions, including financial and political stability (the last "bastion of capitalism" phenomenon), vast natural resources, drastic declines in the dollar *vis-à-vis* other major currencies, and of course the unparalleled transfer of wealth produced by OPEC's price boosts. Throughout, Professor Fry makes it clear that American jobs and values have not been compromised by the many foreign takeovers, at least not yet. His thesis, cogently argued, is simply that "some of our best friends" are foreign investors. The problem, of course, is that some of the foreign investors are not our best friends.

However, by presenting no data for the years after 1977, Professor Fry has skewed his figures—perhaps unintentionally—by minimizing the impact of foreign, particularly Middle Eastern, investment that has arrived since 1977. Moreover, his pre-1978 data are based solely on voluntary disclosures, the accuracy of which is highly questionable. Only since January 1, 1979, after all, has a foreign investor had a legal obligation to report his US acquisitions, and none of this information was available when Fry was preparing his analysis. Furthermore, even the newest data, which show a doubling of annual foreign investment from 1978 to 1979, may be seriously understated, as Professor Fry acknowledges, because foreign investors—expecially those from Arab countries—usually use "neutral" intermediary entities organized in the Netherlands, Antilles, Liechtenstein, or some other exotic tax haven.

But the most serious flaw in Professor Fry's book is his failure to appreciate the difference between Arab investors and other foreigners. As explained in these pages before (see "The Book of OPEC," *TNR*, January 5 & 12; "Oil Imperalism," *TNR*, July 26), Arab investors have quietly assumed effective working control of our banking system by virtue of their control over massive amounts of withdrawable deposits. The recent episode involving "Death of a Princess," moreover, shows that Arab investors cannot necessarily be treated as just one more wave of economic immigrants. By not confronting this reality and its dark implications, Fry substitutes myopia for xenophobia and fails to placate the very fears that are his book's *raison d'être*. The really troubling questions, unfortunately, remain unanswered in his account.

Richard L. Kaplan

Richard L. Kaplan is assistant professor of law at the University of Illinois and a consultant on international tax matters.

Vanessa in Auschwitz

The TV production of Fania Fenelon's *Playing for Time* has been hailed as a portrayal of the Holocaust at last worthy of its theme, and the performance of its star has been called superlative.

Two years earlier I had watched Vanessa Redgrave execute a rousing war-dance in her documentary, *The Palestinians*. Cradling a gun, holding it high with contagious delight, she gyrated gracefully in the circle of her PLO admirers. In a winning scene with a benign, avuncular Arafat she concurred raptly in his vision of a Middle East from which "the Zionist entity," the land of the survivors, would be expunged. How would this woman present a Jewish survivor, yellow star and all, without violating her fierce convictions? My misgivings were needless. Redgrave will be able to repeat her war-dance before Arafat without embarrassment.

The actress is never obliged to utter a word sympathetic to the dream of Palestine that sustained the victims in the camps. Towering above the other members of the cast, she is an almost Olympian figure among the small, fallible creatures who conform to the usual notion of semitic types with not another tall blonde in the lot. Of course, she suffers. Unfailingly she registers horror at what man has done to man, not at what German has done to Jew. Her sublimated *Weltshmerz* transcends the raw agony of the Jewish victim. Marmoreal, remote, when her eyes brim with tears, as they often do, she resembles an icon that miraculously weeps. The tormented women who are her fellows turn to her for sustenance as to a madonna.

In the whole pitiful cast there is only one notably unattractive girl, raucous and unappealing, who provides a perfect foil for Redgrave's beauty and nobility of demeanor. You guessed it: she is the "Zionist." Whenever this unprepossessing character expresses a Jewish hurt or shrilly calls the SS woman commandant a "monster," the heroine voices a higher humanism; we are all human. This Jewish business is distasteful. When the Zionist noisily proclaims her intention of going to Jerusalem if she survives, Redgrave's exalted disdain as she turns away from her is unmistakable.

How does Fania Fenelon describe the Zionist in her book? In a poignant episode in which Fania, a half-Jew, first

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cuts the yellow star she wears in half, then, ashamed, sews back the severed triangle, "Hilde, the Zionist, scorn blazing from her lovely, inspired black eyes" expresses the indignation of the Jews at this mutilation. So the Zionist has "lovely, inspired" eyes. Why then is she consistently shown as a bespectacled shrew in contrast to the other girls, none of whom is accoutred with large, deforming glasses? Among major reviewers only one (John O'Connor of the *New York Times*) ventured to note that the Zionist was not drawn "with enough sympathy." He dismissed the failure as a minor flaw in a great production, but this lets the director off too easily. In view of the agitation aroused by the casting of Redgrave it would have been reasonable to assume that particular care would be taken in the presentation of her ideological antagonist. How better uphold the purity of art? Instead the "Zionist" becomes a caricature not warranted by the text. The problem is not so much in what she says as in how she is made to appear in saying it. Is this deviation from Fenelon's description innocent?

Any portrayal of the Holocaust that ignores or belittles the desperate longing of most of the Jewish survivors for "a land of their own" is a travesty. No honest account can dismiss the force of their Zionist hope. The Displaced Persons camps in the occupied zone of Germany to which Jewish survivors streamed after liberation are its testament. Children in the bleak DP barracks studied the homemade, roughly colored map of Palestine like an illustrated fairy tale. Their elders, despite the British blockade, set out in leaky "illegal" boats that finally opened the gates of the Jewish homeland to the survivors. No one has more poignantly described how the Jewish victims fed on the Zionist dream than Zivia Lubetkin, heroine of the Warsaw Ghetto's last stand. After the ghetto's fall she led a small band of survivors through the sewers. Crawling hour after hour in the slime, one feeling sustained her: "My feet seemed to move automatically in this dark shaft, and the echoes of a remote dream returned, the dream we had of the distant land of Israel, of a life of labor and comradeship, of a life of dignity."

On the credit side of the telecast, both the heroic tenacity and the degradation of the inmates, obliged to pander to the sadism and sentimentality of the SS in the macabre setting of an orchestra, are powerfully depicted. However, what should have been the central impact remains peripheral. The trains disgorging their thousands, the flaming furnaces, the gas chamber become background effects, again raising the question whether the Holocaust can be approached except in documentaries. In any case, it is nonsense to suggest, as commentators have done, that this production does justice to the experience. To mourn for mankind, to assert universal complicity in an evil in which victim and victimizer are guilty, have become a fashionable, soothing evasion of the unique Jewish agony that is the Holocaust. This evasion is terrifying to those who believe that unless the specific nature of what took place is faced, the great crime of our age, this time masked as anti-Zionism, may be repeated.

As for Redgrave, no doubt she will find her act useful. When next she advocates her bloody cause it can be in the striped garb of Jewish martyrdom; and when outraged cries uttered by "Zionist hoodlums" disturb her acceptance of the destined Emmy, she can point to her yellow star.

Marie Syrkin

Marie Syrkin is the author of *The State of the Jews* (New Republic Books).

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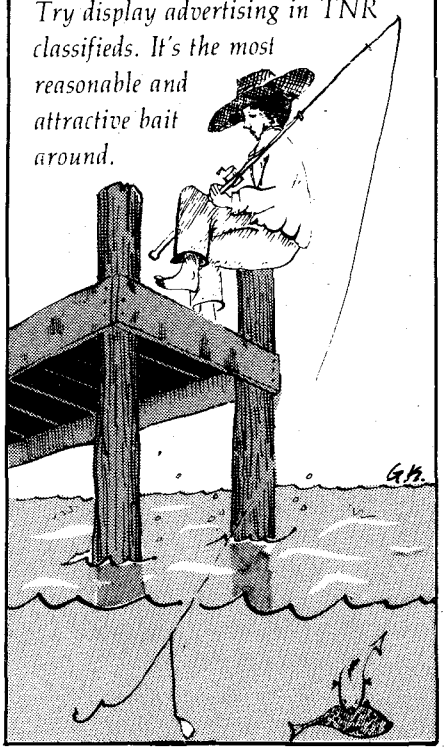

Coming:

William Gass on Latin American Writing.

Kauffmann, *from page 25*

no makeup at all: he contorts his body to suggest disfigurement. Thus we avoid getting used to the horror, and thus symbolically we can accept Merrick's supple discourse out of symbolic grotesqueness. In the film he could not be barefaced: the camera leaves no room for that kind of imagining; yet the lumpy twisted head soon becomes just one more horror-flick getup, and the drawing-room dialogue issuing from it is faintly comic.

What the film proves, I think, is that this idea really belongs in the theater.

Correspondence, *from page 3*

of a white sheet behind him." Mrs. Harris sees some difference here. On the other hand she sees no difference between the *New York Times* reporting the Klan's endorsement of Reagan in an obscure article and a member of the Carter administration exploiting it in a major political speech. She does it again in this letter. Opposition to busing and questioning of affirmative action may be mistaken policies, but they are not tantamount to supporting the Klan, whatever Mrs. Harris and the imperial wizard may think.

Somnolence

To the editors:

Let's have fewer articles about election-year politics and more about sleep ("You're Getting Sleepy," *TNR*, September 27). It's more interesting.

David C. Keller
Greensboro, North Carolina

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Washington Diarist

Soap

Why is John Anderson's campaign stalled? The pundits offer many subtle explanations, but none that I've seen has bothered to mention the difference between Anderson's budget of two million dollars, raised from small contributors, and the $30 million Carter and Reagan each got from the federal government. These two gentlemen are peddling their wares on TV these days more often than Lee Iacocca. Anderson can't afford any TV time. When the Supreme Court upheld the Campaign Finance Act in 1976, it rejected the charge that this "reform" made the two established parties immune to challenge. The Court emphasized that outside candidates can finance their campaigns with loans, which the government will help to repay if they score better than five percent in the election. Anderson's trials illustrate that this sop to outsiders is a perfect illusion. So far he has been unable to borrow any money at all. Reason? The same law, as interpreted by the Federal Election Commission, labels almost any such loan an illegal campaign contribution. A 1979 amendment to the campaign act specifically provides that bank loans without sufficient collateral constitute illegal contributions; the FEC refuses to rule that the promise of government reimbursement is sufficient collateral; bank lawyers advise their clients not to make the loan. Check and mate. That 1979 amendment, by the way, was the result of some fast and loose loans by Georgia banks to Jimmy Carter's campaign in 1976. Another example of Carter's unbelievable political luck: a law directed at his own campaign abuses is silencing his opponent.

Have you seen this year's political commercials? Recently I was rereading Joe McGinnis's *The Selling of the President, 1968*, the book that raised all the alarm about Madison Avenue taking over politics. From the perspective of 1980, the Nixon ads McGinnis describes seem like models of sober political discourse. They consist of Nixon staring into the camera discussing the issues. Nixon is shown actively involved in composing the scripts, inserting points he feels strongly about. McGinnis makes much of the retakes to eliminate stumbles, the emphasis on appearance, and so on, to leave the impression that this was a politician being sold like soap. But for vacuousness, some of the current Carter spots, by Gerald Rafshoon, go far beyond the typical soap commercial, which at least usually includes some specific assertion about the quality of the product. The Carter ads merely show the soap sitting in the dish looking pretty, mingling with prestigious shampoos and deodorants, lathering up to an uplifting musical background. Here is one fine bar of soap, you are supposed to think, without worrying about whether it will get you clean or not. Understandably so.

A conservative British commentator recently described the relish of American liberals at Nixon's fall as "a landmark in the history of *Schadenfreude*" (meaning joy in other people's suffering). I cannot help feeling a similar kind of pleasure—not that I'm trying to help it—over the disgrace of Representative Robert Bauman, Republican of Maryland, caught buying sex from a 16-year-old boy. Bauman is president of the American Conservative Union and a leading young reactionary in the House. He is a chief sponsor of a fatuous bill called the "Family Protection Act," authorizing employers to discriminate against homosexuals. But even leaving aside this particular piece of hypocrisy, Bauman is a prime example of the sort of smug, shallow, well-scrubbed young conservative who comes to his views, you suspect, not after wrestling with the great philosophical questions, but out of a simple failure of empathy. If you are a bright, healthy, educated white male, you don't need any help in the great game of life. And if you're especially obtuse, you may not see why society should offer such help to other people. Now we're supposed to feel sorry for Bauman, and I do feel sorry for him, along with my *Schadenfreude*. But understanding Bauman's problem certainly requires, for most people, a greater leap of empathy than it would require for Bauman to understand the more straightforward problems of the poor and the otherwise disadvantaged. Maybe he will try harder now.

Attentive newspaper readers will have noticed a growing note of alarm about an obscure IRS ruling that affects the publishing industry. The hysteria reached a crescendo with an article on page one of the Sunday, October 5, *New York Times*, headlined: "Millions of Books Endangered as Result of Tax Ruling." Not only will warehouses full of books be destroyed, the article suggests, but uncommercial and scholarly works will become unpublishable, classics will go out of print, "authors will be deprived of financial and psychological support," and literary culture as we know it will collapse. This ruling would have destroyed the careers of William Faulkner and Herman Melville. The article colorfully describes books being "dumped into great vats of chemicals" and recycled into toilet paper. It quotes a publisher saying, pitifully, "We won't destroy a single book as long as there is hope of finding it a home." Like all other articles on this subject, there is not a single quotation expressing doubt about the impending horror, or any explanation of why the IRS would wish to unleash this literary holocaust. The implication is that the government intends to start taxing books that sit in the warehouse waiting to be sold. The truth is different. Publishers have developed the habit of declaring unsold books to be worthless or nearly worthless, and taking a tax loss to reduce the tax on other profits, even though they keep the books stored in the hope of selling them some day at full price. The Supreme Court ruled last year, in a case involving power tools, that you can't say your inventory is worthless to you if it isn't. The IRS concluded that this sensible accounting principle applies to all industries equally, including books. In the same *New York Times* that sends whole libraries of books to their doom on page one, there is a small article on page 80 quoting people from other industries, who say the ruling will have little effect. Book people are a flightier sort, of course, but I think the real difference is that—unlike, say, power-tool makers—publishers share a class interest with opinion-makers and policy-makers. Sometimes they share more than that. The New York Times Company, for example, is a major book publisher. So when publishers cry wolf, people listen. Already there is legislation planned to exempt books from the *Thor Power Tool* ruling. (The greatest beneficiaries will be textbook publishers, by far the most profitable part of the industry.) I look forward to the next *Times* editorial decrying the loopholes and special interests that stand in the way of comprehensive tax reform.

M.E.K.

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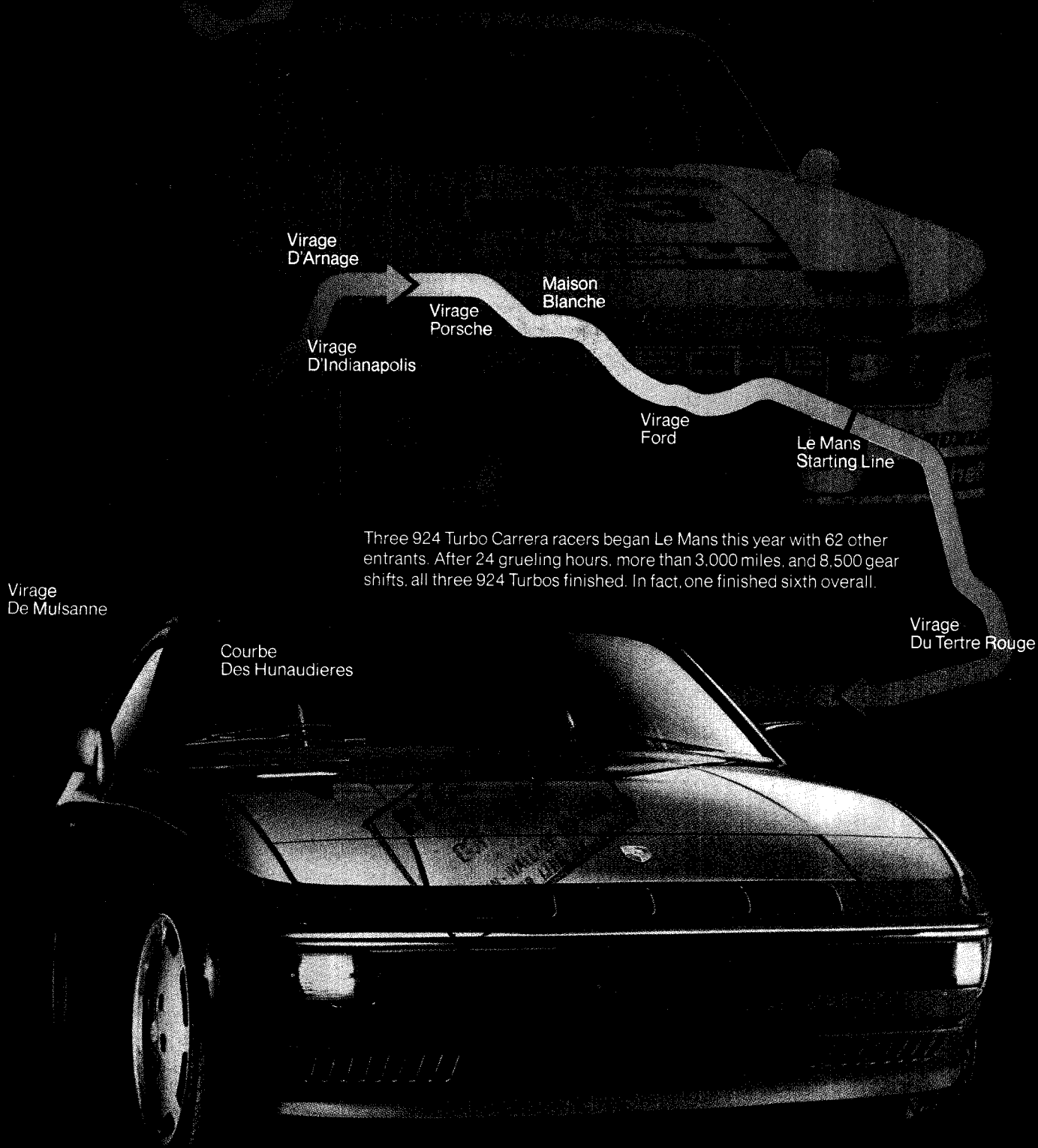
Consumer Orientation
No. 9 in a Series
Subject: The Race Track
as Proving Ground

Porsche 924 Turbo



Three 924 Turbo Carrera racers began Le Mans this year with 62 other entrants. After 24 grueling hours, more than 3,000 miles, and 8,500 gear shifts, all three 924 Turbos finished. In fact, one finished sixth overall.

At Porsche, our goal is to put the best engineering into our cars. But for every problem, there are a number of solutions. And the merits of each one can be debated endlessly. So for us, the ultimate test is racing. Because on the track, under the stresses, surprises, and realities of competition, the best solution will win. Using the race track as a proving ground is expensive, and often frustrating. But we believe the rewards are well worth it. What we learn from our race cars, we put into our street cars. At Porsche, excellence is expected.

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